

THE MIDDLE AGES

From 476 A.D. to the Fall of the Hohenstaufens

K. C. CHAUDHURI, M.A., LL.B., D.Phil.

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Foreword to the First Edition

It was during the medieval period that the decadent world of Greece and Rome was transformed into the expansionist and progressive Europe of the Age of Renaissance and Discovery. The story of the transformation is one of the most significant and instructive chapters in the history of the world. The preservation of the classical heritage by the barbarians was little less than a miracle, particularly because Islam enjoyed a predominance in the Mediterranean world which was a constant threat to the development of European civilisation and economy along independent lines. The primitive energy of the barbarians, disciplined by serious political and military challenges as also by the growing influence by the Church, kept Islam at bay while drawing intellectual sustenance from its philosophy and science, gave a new direction to European economy and culture and prepared the smallest of continents for the high privilege and responsibility of world supremacy. It is an exciting story indeed, revolving round the provocative personality of great leaders of action and thought and deriving colour from picturesque manifestations of the human spirit such as chivalry and monasticism.

In several Indian Universities medieval European history has been recognised for many years as a compulsory subject of study for advanced students of History. This is just as it should be, for it is quite impossible to understand how European history shaped itself during the modern period without some acquaintance with medieval institutions and thought. As Indian teachers and students are usually unable to utilise historical works in French and German they have to depend on text-books written in English by English and American authors. In many cases, however, these text-books do not fulfil the special requirements of Indian students and some of their problems are either left out or inadequately treated. Much of what is familiar to University students in Europe and America is naturally unfamiliar to us in an entirely different social and religious environment. The Catholic mind which dominated medieval

Europe is a mystery to us; hardly less mysterious are the different aspects of Feudalism around which medieval economic life organised itself. It is necessary that these—and other—basic problems should be treated in a way which would enable our students to grasp the real meaning of medieval European history. In the all-important sector of College text-books we should attain self-sufficiency as well as in other sectors of our national needs.

Dr. K. C. Chaudhuri, a well-known scholar and veteran teacher of History, has taken up the challenge and produced a text-book on medieval European history which combines scholarship with readability and thoroughness with brevity. His long experience of teaching under-graduate class has provided for him the much-needed background, and his careful study of standard works on the subject has enabled him to view medieval problems in the perspective of authoritative analysis. He has tried to give Indian students exactly what they need, and he has achieved noteworthy success. I am sure teachers and students alike will appreciate this pioneer work and recognise their debt to this bold venture.

A. C. BANERJEE

Preface to the Second Edition

The response that the first edition of this book had evoked, encouraged me to undertake its revision with great pleasure.

In this edition the book has been thoroughly revised and enlarged and it is hoped, it will be found more useful by the students.

My thanks are due to all those teachers and students who have helped the book to go in for its second edition.

Calcutta,
June, 1960.

THE AUTHOR

THE MIDDLE AGES

CHAPTER 1

Break-up of the Roman Empire

1/ Division of Roman Empire : West and East : THE CITY OF ROME, founded in 753 B.C., was originally important only as a commercial centre being situated on the Tiber very near to the place where it flows into the Mediterranean. But subsequently Rome grew into a political Power and expanded her empire over a large part of Europe, the Tigris and the Euphrates valleys in Asia Minor, and the northern coasts of Africa. In 330 A.D. Emperor Constantine founded a second capital at Byzantium on the Black Sea, which came to be known after Constantine as *Constantinople*. Virtually, the vast Roman Empire was divided into two parts, Western and Eastern, the former ruled from its capital at Rome and the latter from the newly founded capital at Constantinople. In the fifth century A.D. (476) the West Roman Empire was broken up by the invading *barbarians* but the Eastern Empire, also called the Byzantine Empire with Constantinople as its capital continued to exist for about a thousand years more (1453).

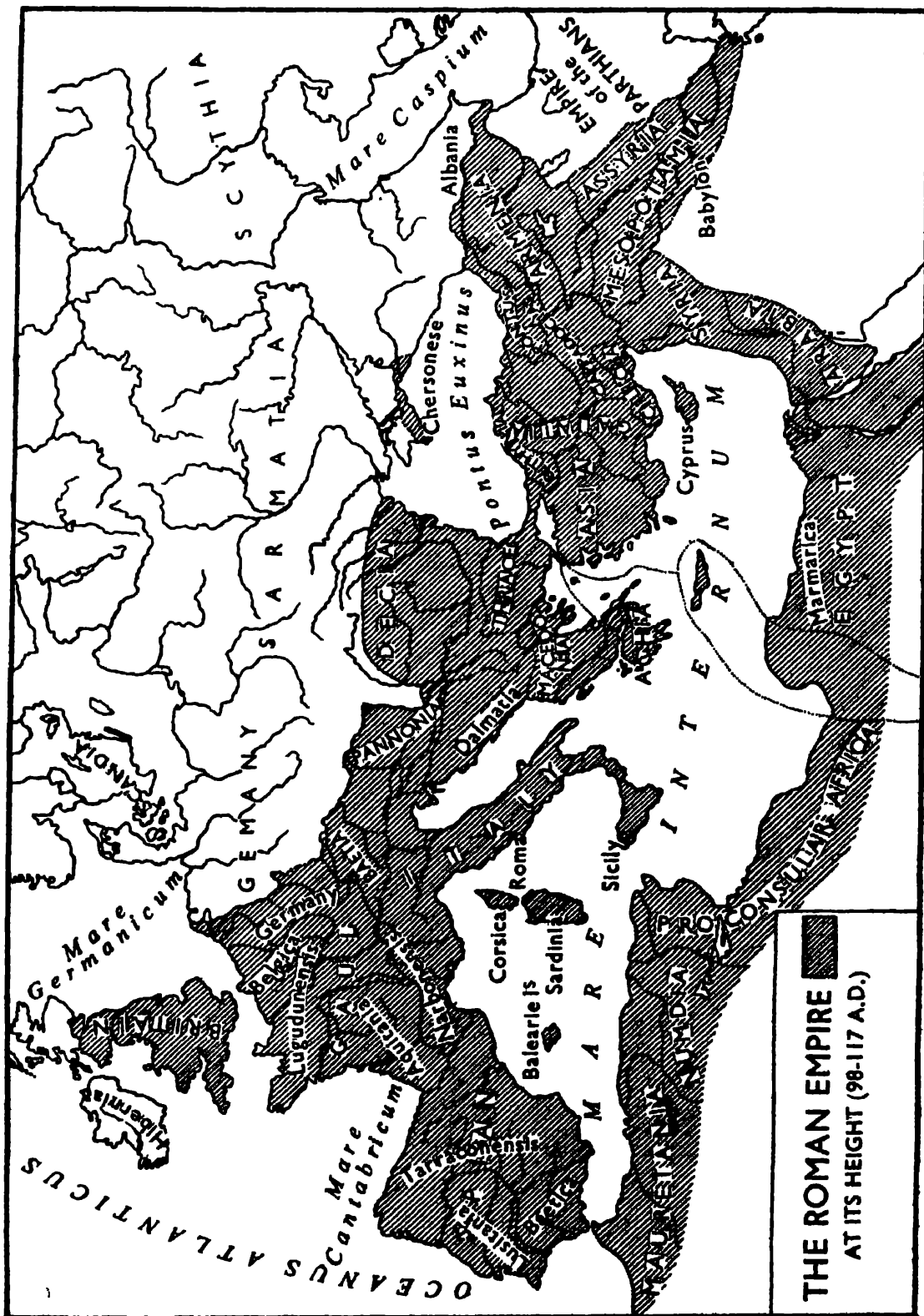
*Foundations
of the city of
Rome*

*Constanti-
nople—
Second
Roman capital*

*Eastern or
Byzantine
Empire*

2/ The Barbarians : At the very outset it is necessary to understand the meaning of the word *Barbarian* in relation to the Roman Empire and the Romans. Although it was customary to dub the Goths, Vandals, Franks, etc., as Barbarians, yet the term was used in no more derisive meaning than what was meant by the Greeks to describe the outlanders. The so-called barbarians—the Goths, Vandals, Franks, etc., were known to the Romans long before their conquest of the West. As a matter of fact, the empire in the fourth century was filled with the Latinized barbarians of Gothic and Vandal

*The
Barbarians :
The Goths,
Vandals,
Franks, etc.*



stock. Within the empire a Goth or a Vandal was called so by the Romans for his Gothic or Vandal family origin, but insofar as the Roman law was concerned he was as good a Roman as anybody else. The difference between a Roman and a Latinized barbarian varied in degrees in direct proportion to the Latin cultural absorption by the barbarian. The Germans, that is, the barbarians served in huge numbers in the Roman legions and were admitted to all the legal rights of a true Roman. Since military service was a sure way to political preferment, many of the barbarians who began as soldiers ended their careers as high officials of state. Nobody doubted their ability or their desire to be good Romans. Acquiring wealth and power, they intermarried with the noblest families of the empire, for German blood was, in particular, no social disgrace. The only difference between the barbarians who lived within the empire as Romans and served in the Roman legions and the barbarians who lived across the borders of the Roman Empire was that the former were paid by the Emperor, were more disciplined and cultured, while the latter were more undisciplined, less cultured and ill-paid.

*Barbarians
in Roman
service*

*Difference
between the
barbarians
within the
Roman
Empire and
those across
the border*

A Vandal soldier named Stilicho rose to high favour under Emperor Theodosius and particularly under his incompetent son Emperor Honorius who succeeded as western emperor in 395 A.D. Stilicho who was made the *patricius* and the master of the Roman troops, eventually became the father-in-law of Honorius and the *de facto* ruler of the west. Alaric, the king or rather the elected Chief of the Visigoths was admitted by Theodosius as a *faederati*, that is, an ally, and was stationed along the Danube. The barbarians were, therefore, not an unknown people to the Romans or to the empire.

*Vandal
Stilicho
made Roman
Patricius*

*Visigoth
Alaric made
a faederati*

3/ The Barbarians before the Invasions :
In the third century A.D. the lands beyond the frontiers of the Roman Empire were inhabited by

*Ural-
Altaics and
German Celts*

the Moors or Berbers in Africa, the Arabs and the Persians in western Asia, the Ural-Altaic nomads on the Central Asian plateau and the Caspian steppe, and on the north-west by the Germans and the Celts. Of the above peoples of different language groups the Ural-Altaics and the German Celts deserve special notice, for, in the fifth century the western empire broke up as a result of the impact of their migrating push. In the Ural-Altaic group belonged peoples like the Scythians, Magyars, Mongols, Turks, Tartars, Avars, Bulgars, Huns, etc. They were nomads and would drive their flocks from place to place for pasturage and shelter. They would move on horseback with the very minimum of tents, rugs and utensils driving their cattle before. They had no need of any political organisation beyond the customary discipline of the tribe enforced by its chief. With the ordinary occupation of a pastoral life, the nomads added those of the professional marauders. The raids were more often than not, merely for loot, and the history of India, China, Persia, Syria and even Egypt bear testimony to death and destruction spread by these nomads. The Caspian steppe gave these nomads an easy highway into the heart of the European Continent, and in the fourth century the Huns entering into Europe through this route terrorised people dwelling across the Roman frontier. The Huns, as described by the chroniclers of the empire "resembled beasts rather than men—with their squat bodies, bow-legs, and ugly faces marked by prominent ears, flat noses, slanting eyes, swarthy skins, and bristling hair. And behind their repulsive exterior, enhanced by filthiness of their habits, lay a stark stiff ferocity that daunted their more civilised antagonists." The prominent among the victims of the Huns were the Slavs who inhabited the lands north of the Pontic steppe, now called Central Russia. But ultimately when the more war-like peoples—the Germans and the Huns, etc., fought and killed one another and

*Depredatory
raids*

Huns

*Slavs—the
victims of
Huns*

*Slavs settled
in Eastern
Europe*

pushed westward to despoil the Roman provinces, the Slavs quietly occupied the vacated lands of the eastern Europe and made it almost solidly Slavic.

The Celts or the Gauls as the Romans called them in a much earlier age, had inhabited the forest lands of the northern Europe as far east as the Elbe. From there, they once migrated across the Alps and threatened to wipe out the then little Republic of Rome. They had also crossed the Rhine and settled in the country called Gaul (France). With the Latinization of the Celts and the Gauls, the Celtic dialects disappeared and they were mixed with the Mediterranean people.

*The Celts
and the Gauls*

The peoples whom the Romans knew as *Germani*, i.e. the Germans, were at first living in lands bordering on the Baltic. Thence they moved towards the South and overtook the country between the Elbe and the Rhine wherefrom their further movement towards the south was held in check by the Roman defences. From Tacitus' *Germania* we come to know of the physical traits of the Germans. He describes Germans as having "fierce blue eyes and reddish hair, great bodies, specially powerful for attack, but not equally patient of hard work, little able to withstand heat and thirst, though by climate and soil they have been inured to cold and hunger." Caesar in his *Commentaries* described them as depending on hunting and fishing; Tacitus emphasised their agriculture. While the work on the agricultural fields was left with those who could not fight, others took part in fights and hunting, loafing and looting. The wealth among the Germans consisted mainly of cattle, horses and other animals. In the Roman frontiers the Roman coins served as the medium of exchange, but in the interior the cattle and the livestock as a whole served that purpose. From Tacitus we come to know of an extensive number of German tribes. In the third century the Goths striking south from the Baltic overran the Danubian

The Germans

*Sources :
Tacitus'
Germania*

*Caesar's
Commentaries*

*Goths overran
the Danubian
provinces*

*Three
powerful
confederations:
Alamans,
Franks and
Saxons*

provinces. They threatened the whole of the European frontiers and were finally checked by Marcus Aurelius. But all the same, Aurelius was forced to leave them in possession of Dacia. In the meantime, three powerful confederations of the German tribes became thoroughly entrenched. They were the Alamans ('allmen'), the Franks ('the free') and the Saxons ('the dagger man').

*Roman
Emperor
Diocletian's
reform of the
military
system*

The shortage of troops in the Roman legions and Diocletian's attempts to reform the military system called for a huge number of troops to reach the target of half a million-men army, led to the recruitment of the African Moors, Syrian Arabs and Germans of the bordering areas of the Roman Empire. This process led to the influx of streams of Moors, Arabs and Germans into the Roman Empire and even whole tribes, *e.g.* Visigoths, Vandals, etc., were admitted into the Roman Empire as *foederati*, that is, the allies to whom lands had been assigned in return for the duty of patrolling the frontiers of the empire. Such arrangements were ordinary enough, to begin with, but it was merely an unfortunate accident that such arrangements had tragic consequences in the end. The troubles cast their shadows before and the Goths became involved in a violent quarrel with certain high-handed Roman officials which led to the battle of Adrianople, in 378 A.D. in which Balens was slain. Emperor Theodosius, however, restored peace and the Goths faithfully guarded the frontiers during his reign.

*Barbarians
as foederati*

*Battle of
Adrianople*

*Emperor
Theodosius*

Arcadius

4/ Barbarians in the Fifth Century : The Imperial Collapse : We have already traced the rise of Stilicho, a Vandal *patricius* to the position of the real master of the western empire. Yet he remained only half-satisfied, for, his ambition now was to acquire similar mastery over the eastern empire over which ruled another incompetent son of Theodosius, named Arcadius. But his attempt failed but had the evil consequence of encouraging

similar attempts by other adventurers like him. The Gothic king Alaric, whom Theodosius had settled on the Roman frontier as *foederati* imitated Alaric Stilicho and with a seeming consent of Arcadius, imitated Stilicho led his Gothic hordes against Italy. Stilicho, who was faced with other rebellions within Italy, somehow mustered his troops and held off Alaric till 408 successfully. Honorius, jealous of the growing power of Stilicho and annoyed at the evil consequences of his attempt to bring Arcadius' empire under his control, got him executed on a charge of treason. This led to greater chaos and Honorius shut himself up in the fortress of Ravenna and allowed things to happen as they would. Alaric started negotiations with Honorius which led to nothing and Alaric starved Rome to submission and gave the proud city to his troops for three days' pillage (410). But death of Alaric soon after cut him in the midst of his plan of ruthless campaigns. Honorius finding his defences totally collapsed, recalled the Roman troops stationed in Britain and left that country to the tender mercy of the Picts and the Scots and eventually to the German Anglo-Saxons. Across the frontiers, now stripped of protecting troops, poured in hosts of barbarians to do whatever they liked with the imperial provinces. Northern Gaul was occupied by the Franks, Alamans and the Burgundians, the Vandals and their allies took Aquitaine and Spain. The Visigoths in the meantime elected Alaric's brother (brother-in-law according to some), to the Visigoth kingship and a marriage relation between him and the sister of Honorius led to a sort of a Roman alliance. The Visigoths now invaded southern Gaul and defeated and compelled the Vandals to abandon Spain and cross over to Africa. There the Vandal king Gaiseric secured the entire territory west of Tripoli and organised it as an independent kingdom and made it the base of piratical expeditions to the north and the east.

*Alaric
imitated
Stilicho*

Honorius

*Northern
Gaul under
Franks,
Alamans,
Burgundians
and Franks*

*Matrimonial
alliance
between
Romans and
the Visigoths*

*Vandals
crossed over
to Africa*

*Huns
extended
their
dominions
from the
Caspian to
the Rhine*

Attila

*Death of
Attila—
end of Hun
menace*

*Sack of
Rome by
Vandal King
Gaiseric*

*Odoacer
put an end
to the Roman
imperial line
—476 A.D.*

When the affairs of the west were in such a pass the Huns extended their dominions from the Caspian to the Rhine and only spared the east Roman empire because the east Roman emperor paid them handsome blackmail. But under their new and vigorous leader Attila, they decided on wider operations and proceeded against the west Roman empire. In the meantime Valentinian had become the emperor and being weak and irresolute was not expected to do anything to stop the menace. But the master of his troops Aetius took the field against the invaders and with the able support of the Visigoths he succeeded in defeating the Huns in the famous battle of Catalaunian fields (451) now called Champagne. This only diverted Attila from Gaul to Italy but his death in 453 led to the break-up of the Hun hordes and the Huns ceased to be a menace to the empire.

The dissolution of the Hun horde had provided a respite to the western empire but condition within the empire became steadily worse. The next Emperor Valentinian III had Aetius put to death which was avenged by the retainers of Aetius by assassinating Valentinian himself (455). The Vandal king Gaiseric seized the opportunity and brought his Vandal horde up the Tiber and sacked Rome. The political fabric of the west empire now had fallen into pieces and the military bosses and high officials as well as the commanders of the German mercenaries put and pulled down emperor after emperor until in 476 one Odoacer decided to end this useless formality of putting an emperor on the throne. He deposed the last puppet boy emperor rather mockingly called Romulus Augustulus and sent the insignia of the vacant office of the western empire to Zeno who had in the meantime become the emperor of the east empire after the line of Theodosius had become extinct. Odoacer was now given the customary title of *patricius* and theoretically the western

and the eastern empires were being ruled by one emperor.

5/ The Nature of the Barbarian Invasions :

From the foregoing discussions it will be evident that the Roman empire in the west did not fall due to any shock of foreign conquest or become barbarised through any deliberate attack on the ancient culture. The so-called barbarian invasions, therefore, are very hard to define. From the late fourth century there had been numerous barbarians, *i.e.* the Germans, in the services of the empire. They were serving in the Roman army as well as in the civil government and were settled on the borders of the empire and were regarded as allies or *faederati*. The introduction of the so-called barbarians into the Roman Empire did not give rise to any civil war or rapine. The great barbarian inroads which brought the Franks, Alamans, Burgundians, Vandals, etc., within the Roman border did not disturb the legal status of the emperor. These newcomers were all legalised. Even when the Roman Emperors became no better than puppets in the hands of the barbarians the form and the show of the legal status of the emperor were retained. The deposition of Romulus Augustulus, the last of the Roman Emperor by Odoacer did not legally mean the end of the Roman Empire, for, he recognised the sovereignty of Zeno of the east Roman Empire and there was at least legally if not practically or really, unity of the eastern and the western empires under Zeno. It has, therefore, been observed by a modern European writer that legally and technically "there were neither invasions nor barbarians, there was neither a fall nor an end of the western empire." Be that as it may, the fact remains that the western part of the empire came to an end insofar as the unity of the empire was concerned and Zeno in spite of the proffered allegiance of Odoacer knew the reality of the position and Odoacer was likewise aware of his own power.

*Germans in
Roman army:
Germans
on the
Roman
borders
faederati,
i.e. allies*

*Odoacer
recognised
East
Roman
imperial
sovereignty*

*Factually
Roman
empire in
the West
came to an
end*

*Germans
absorbed
among the
Romans*

6/ The Barbarian Kingdoms : Our sources of information about the territories subjected by the Germans are meagre, yet these are sufficient to warrant the remark that throughout their subjected territories the Germans were a small minority whose authority rested on military strength. And wherever that military strength was broken, the conquerors as a separate unit had vanished and were absorbed and assimilated into the great body of the conquered population. However, it is worthwhile to pursue the history of the German kingdoms, at least of the important ones as they had emerged after the barbarian inroads.

*Vandal
Odoacer's
rule for 17
years*

*Ostrogothic
invasion :
Theodoric*

*Seeming
allegiance
to Zeno*

*Ostrogothic
chiefs coped
with the*

(a) **Kingdom of the Ostrogoths :** Upon Odoacer's assumption of power after deposing Romulus Augustulus the Vandal rule began, and continued in Italy for seventeen years. Odoacer had seized the territories of the wealthy Italians and divided them between his followers. His feeble government was, however, brought to a close by the invasion of the Ostrogoths, *i.e.* the Eastern Goths under Theodoric. The Ostrogoths came from the Lower Danubian region and they had been guarding the Danubian frontier of the Roman Empire as *foederati*. Theodoric was a nominal ally of the eastern emperor and proved himself to be a costly friend. He obtained a seeming permission from emperor Zeno to invade Italy which was then under the Vandal chief Odoacer. It is also suggested from the Byzantine source that emperor Zeno himself had hinted to Theodoric the project of Italian conquest. At any rate, the Ostrogoth chief Theodoric proceeded against Italy with his 200,000 followers in the fashion of a migrating horde. Italy was not simply to be plundered but occupied as a permanent homeland. The genius and daring of Theodoric, the greatest of the Ostrogoth chiefs, coped with the dangers that beset the long trek of seven hundred miles from the Danubian region to Italy through

snows and severe cold and the treacherous attacks of the bands of Gepides and other tribes. The intrepid spirit of Theodoric's followers, the prospect of the rich booty that awaited them made the march a success against numerous obstacles. In 489 the Italians were again startled by the apparition of a Gothic horde issuing from the defiles of the Alps.

*danger of
attacks by
Gepides*

Odoacer and his followers fought for the defence of Italy continuously for three years which meant terrible suffering for the people of Italy. In 493 Ravenna surrendered and Odoacer was taken captive and was treacherously murdered by Theodoric at a banquet. Theodoric assumed the sovereignty of the entire Italian peninsula and distributed among his followers all the best lands. Theodoric, however, compensated Italy by a quiet, good, prosperous rule like of which Italy had not experienced since the time of the Good Antonines. Theodoric's rule of thirty-three (?) years offers a great relief in the history of the barbarian rule. This kingdom which owed so much to Theodoric's genius existed only twenty-seven years after his death (526). In 553 Italy was freed from the barbarian rule by the generals of Justinian, the east Roman Emperor.

*Murder of
Odoacer*

*Theodoric
King of Italy*

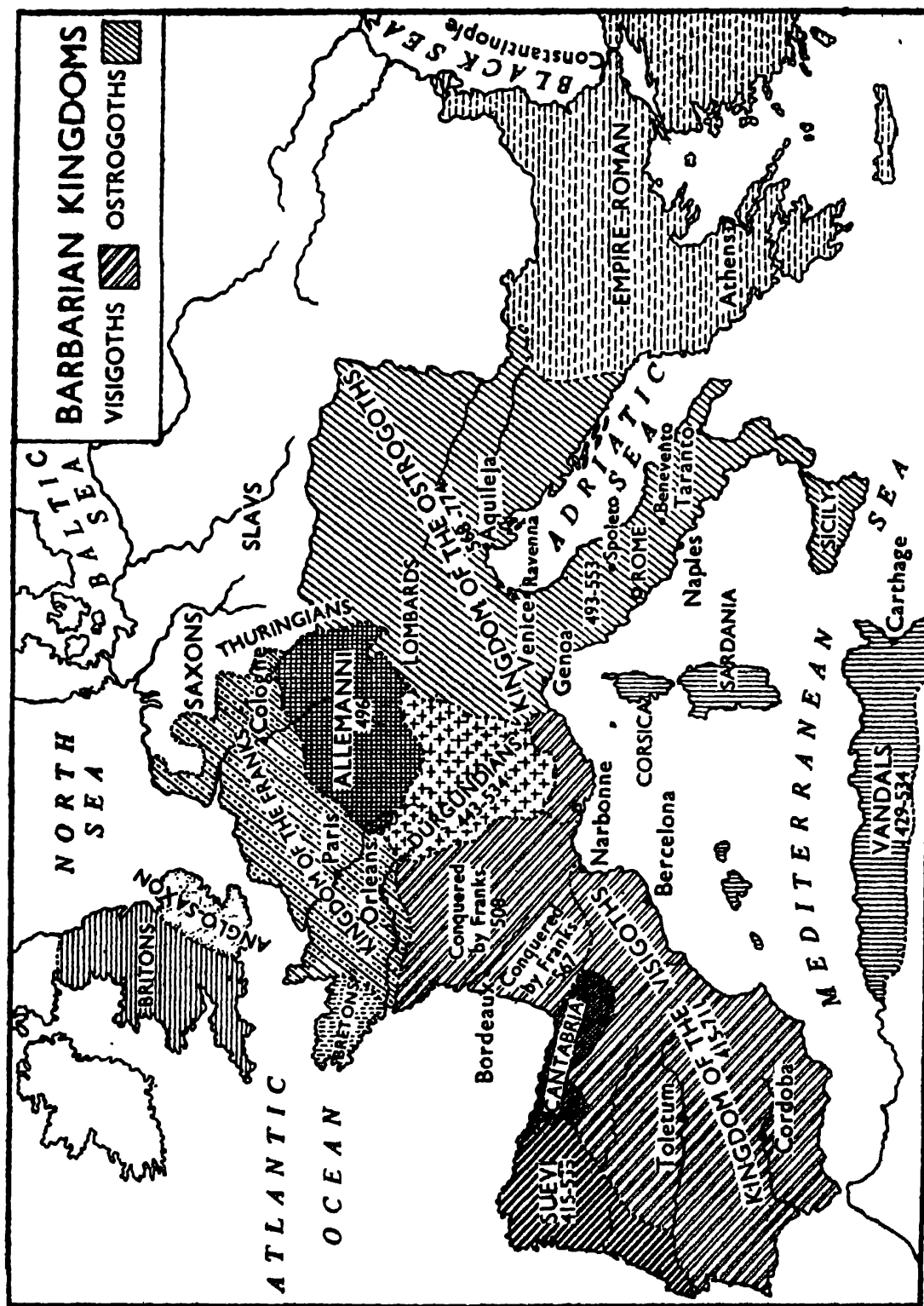
*Theodoric's
prosperous
rule*

Theodoric the Great (493-526) : Theodoric's life and activities represent a rare and commendable example of a barbarian who sheathed his sword in the pride of victory and the prime of life, and gave himself to the task of civil government for abiding peace and prosperity of Italy.

*A barbarian
given to peace
and civil
government*

The victory of Theodoric had spread a general alarm in the West but the peaceful intentions, the wisdom and generosity of his government soon converted that terror into respect. Soon Theodoric's mediation was looked upon as the only just method of reconciliation of mutual quarrels and even civilising their manners. It is no exaggeration to say

*His victory
generated
terror—his
generosity
converted
terror into
respect*



that Theodoric's kingdom in Italy was the most Roman of all the barbarian kingdoms. Under him the old system of administration continued without a break. He kept himself surrounded by officials who bore the traditional titles of Diocletian's empire. He went as far as any one could to preserve the form and authority of the Roman Senate and Roman law. Boethius, a Roman, author of the most widely read book *On the Consolation of Philosophy*, was appointed consul to Theodoric. In fact, he ruled as a *Roman of the Romans*.

*Ruled like a Roman:
Retained Roman institutions*

It was no easy task that confronted Theodoric. He had not only to repair the ravages of long years, but also to harmonise the Goths and the Romans and weld them into a homogeneous people, to train them to live at peace together. An Arian Christian himself, he had to win the support of the Catholic clergy on whose good will, he rightly recognised, his success as a ruler would largely depend. The fact that he succeeded in doing these was an eloquent testimony to his greatness.

Sought to weld Goths and the Romans into one people

Theodoric had won Italy by right of conquest but he tried to give it a legal and moral sanction. He started negotiations with the Eastern Emperor Zeno, which did not conclude due to latter's death in 491, and it was in 497 that he received recognition of his kingship from Emperor Anastasius. In the meantime he had secured confirmation of his kingship from his Ostrogothic followers whom he allotted a third of the lands of Italy. The recognition of his rule by the Emperor gave him special strength to rule over the Romans and enabled him to secure the help of the Roman officials in the different work of organising and administering the kingdom.

Ruled as a representative of the Roman Emperor

Under Theodoric's strong and good government for about thirty years, Italy settled down to thirty years' (thirty-three according to some) uninterrupted peace and prosperity. Trade developed, agriculture

Reign of peace and prosperity

revived and Italy became surplus in food which enabled her to export corn instead of importing it. Great cities of Italy were repaired and once more adorned with works of art and defended by strong walls. Roads were improved and local produces moved easily from one part of the country to the other. Ravenna was made Theodoric's capital.

*Possessed
Napoleon's
marvellous
power of
supervising
details of
administration*

*Theodosian
Code*

The administration went on under the eye of Theodoric 'who had something of Napoleon's marvellous power of supervising all the details of administration'. He was also served by a well-organised body of officials from the highest officials of the State to the junior clerks. The consuls and other magistrates were annually installed and the Roman Senate enjoyed its accustomed prestige. Theodoric enforced Roman law and in order to do that he promulgated his famous *Edict* which was modelled after the *Theodosian Code*. The taxes collected under him were the same as under his predecessor.

*Cultural
activities*

Theodoric revived the tradition of food supply to his subjects. This gave Italy a last renewal of prosperity. His zeal for buildings, public works, fortifications was also in the tradition of the Roman Empire. Classic art and classic literature as testified in the mosaics at Ravenna, in the works of Boethius and Cassiodorus are illustrations of the culture fostered under Theodoric although he had no share in all this.

Foreign policy

Theodoric's diplomacy was not of a mean order; in his foreign policy his aim was to serve the interests of German kingdoms. He entered into several marriage alliances all of which were calculated to preserve them both from imperial attempts at recovery and the mutual quarrels and ambitions of conquest. He gave his sister Amalafrida to the Vandal king Thrasamund, his niece to Hermanfrid of Thuringia, one of his daughters to Alaric II the Visigoth, another to Sigismund the Burgundian and

the third Amalasuntha to Eutharic. Theodoric took Audofleda, sister of Clovis the Frank, as his second wife.

Theodoric was an Arian, but he followed an enlightened policy of religious toleration. His attitude in this regard is manifest in his remark: "We cannot order a religion, because no one is forced to believe against his will. To pretend to rule over the spirits is to usurp the rights of the Divinity. The power of the greatest sovereign is limited to exterior police." The persecuted heathen Alamanni who had escaped from Clovis' overlordship were settled by Theodoric in his dominion. "In his protection of the Jews against the violence of the orthodox Christians this barbarian heretic showed himself not only more enlightened than his orthodox contemporaries, but considerably more civilised than many of his successors down to the twentieth century."

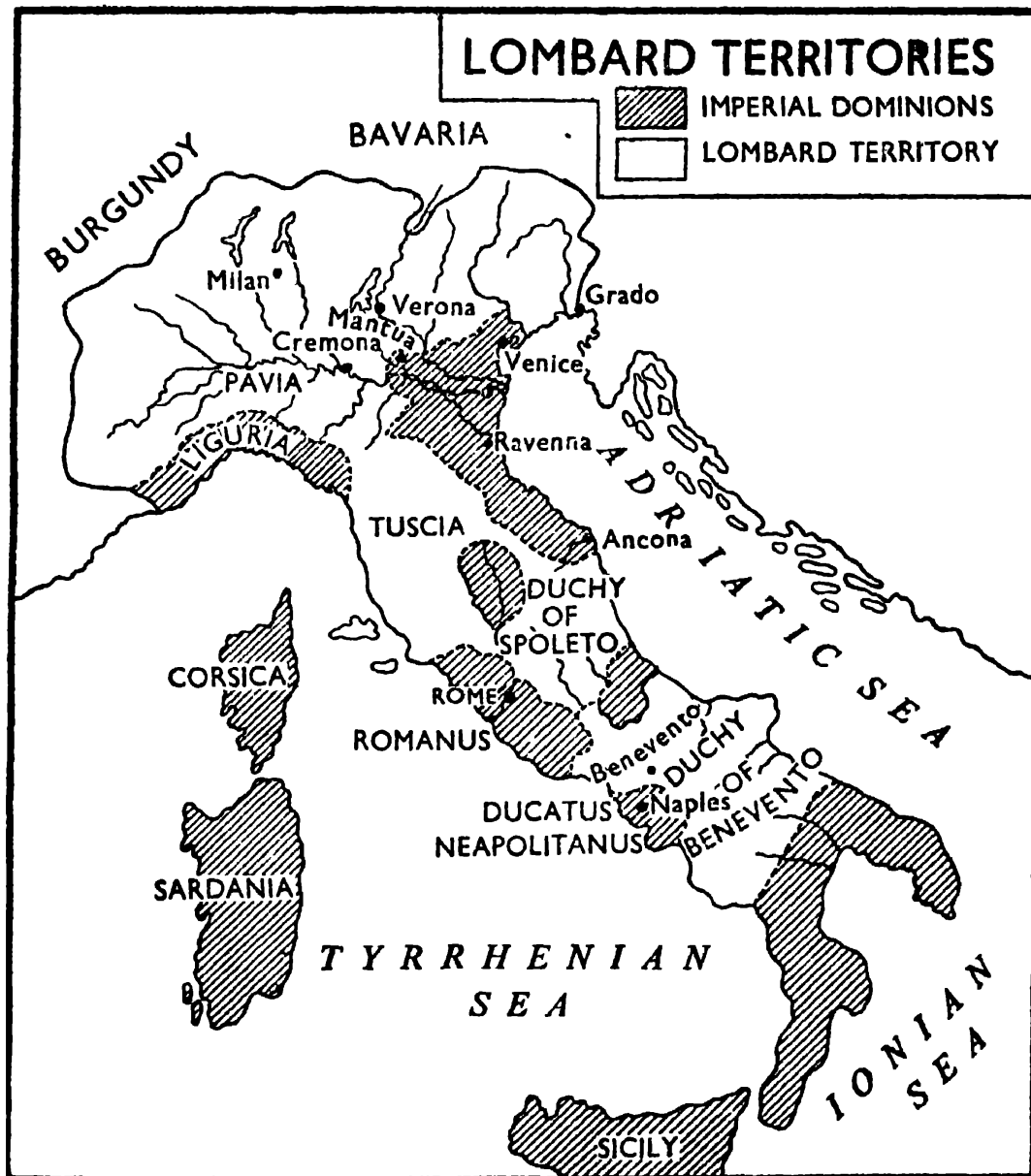
*His
Catholicity*

Theodoric had to rule over two peoples—the Goths and the Romans. Despite this difficulty of his situation he made himself the most loved barbarian king by the Roman way that he had followed and the keen sense of justice that he possessed. He maintained law and order, displayed tolerance towards the Catholics, protected rights of the people, was keen on maintaining the traditions of the Goths and the Romans. He preserved the legal institutions of Rome, ordered the building of monuments after Roman and Byzantine models. Theodoric's rescript writer Cassiodorus and his many other panegyrists lavishly praised him for his moderation, civilisation and benevolence, but however lavish such praises might have been they were real and not exaggerated.

*Most loved
barbarian*

"His manner of ruling over his subjects was worthy of a great emperor, for he maintained justice, made good laws, protected his country from invasion, and gave proof of extraordinary prudence and va-

*Worthy of
being
regarded as
a great king*



lour.” His choice of ministers and other high officials showed his wisdom. The reign of Theodoric, in fact, was the first attempt to harmonise the old and new, ‘to blend the Roman ideals of order and *civilitas* with the Teutonic spirit of freedom’.

(b) **Kingdom of the Visigoths:** The Visigoths or the western Goths had already spread themselves into Spain and south Gaul when Odoacer assumed power in Italy. The chief of the Visigoths, Euric was comparable in ability and efficiency with Theodoric of the Ostrogoths. Euric made his mark not only in the whole of Europe, but his fame spread as far as Asia. From the south of the Pyrenees, *i.e.* the southern Gaul, the Visigoths were driven out by their kindred people the Franks but they held most of Spain under their control till the beginning of the eighth century when the Saracens crossed over to Spain and defeated Roderic, the last of the Gothic kings in Spain (711). The Visigoth rule, however, lasted for about three hundred years in Spain.

*Visigoths
in Spain*

*Euric—the
Visigoth
Chief*

*Saracens put
an end to
Visigoth rule
in Spain*

(c) **Kingdom of the Burgundians:** The Burgundians, a kindred race of the Goths, established their permanent settlement at Savoy in the middle of the fifth century with the permission of the Romans. By conquest and diplomacy later on they acquired a considerable portion of Switzerland and modern France. In France, a portion is still called Burgundy from the name of the German settlers of the fifth century. The Burgundians, however, came in collision with the Franks on the north before they were firmly settled in their kingdom and were reduced by the Frankish king Clovis.

*Burgundian
kingdom in
Savoy—
extension to
parts of
France and
Switzerland*

(d) **Kingdom of the Vandals:** During the latter half of the fourth century and early fifth century, the Vandals left their seats in Pannonia for overcrowding, came to Gaul, Spain and northern Africa. In Africa they made Carthage the capital of their kingdom in that region. The Vandals were

*Vandals in
Gaul, Spain
and north-
Africa*

*Vandals also
called
Vikings*

*Justinian's
general
Belisarius
restored north
Africa to
the Eastern
Empire*

the most ruthless and violent of all the German tribes and their name today stands for destruction, pillage and marauding. Their name was a terror to the entire Mediterranean world. They are also called the 'Vikings of the South' and even walled and well-protected cities could not escape the audacious attacks of these people. Besides conquering north Africa, they seized Corsica, Sardinia, Balearic isles, etc. Their persecution of the African Catholics has no parallel in history of cruelty. The eastern emperor, Justinian took up their challenge and sent his able general Belisarius to drive the barbarians from north Africa, at a time when the Vandals were engaged in the conquest of Sardinia. The expedition of Belisarius was successful and north Africa was restored to the eastern empire. Many of the Vandals now began to enlist themselves in the army of the eastern empire, and others were gradually being absorbed by the native population and after a few generations there was no trace of barbarian population that could be detected.

*Lombard
conquest of
parts of
Italy*

(e) **Kingdom of the Lombards:** From the region of the Middle Danube came the Lombards, probably so-called for their long beard. They first came into the service of the eastern emperor and entrusted with the task of exterminating the Gepidae. Thereafter they turned to the conquest of Italy just after the expulsion of the Ostrogoths by the generals of Justinian. The Lombards, like the Ostrogoths, crossed the Alps and entered the valley of the Po, and gradually subjugated a large part of the peninsula. The cities on the sea coasts, Rome and the southern portion of the peninsula could not be conquered by them. The Lombards were next to the Vandals in cruel orgies and in acts of destruction and pillage. Albion, their king had slain the defeated chief of the Gepidae and married his daughter Rosamund. Albion's studied cruelty is to be found in the story of his compelling his bride Rosamund

to drink wine from her father's skull which Albion had made into a drinking cup. Rosamund did not forgive Albion for this insult and plotted his murder and when Albion was actually murdered, she married the murderer in gratitude. The Lombards, however, became tamed and civilised and in process of time became ardent patrons of art and learning. All this was due to the influence of Roman Christianity and Italian manner of life and living upon them. The Lombard kingdom in the northern part of Italy survived till it was conquered by Charlemagne in 774.

*Lombards
turned into
good
Christians
and patrons
of art and
learning*

(f) **Anglo-Saxon kingdoms in Britain:** The withdrawal of the Roman legion from Britain by emperor Honorius in 410 when Italy was threatened by the barbarians left the Britons defenceless. They were simultaneously attacked by the Picts and the Scots from the north and the German races called the Angles and Saxons or the Anglo-Saxons from the seaside. The Britons incapable of defending themselves vainly appealed to Rome for help, which the latter was not in a position to render. In different waves of conquests the Jutes, the Angles and the Saxons began to pour into Britain and conquer portions for themselves. The result was the rise of a number of Anglo-Saxon kingdoms in Britain. By the close of the sixth century the invading bands set up eight to ten, perhaps more, separate kingdoms, somewhat inaccurately designated as *Heptarchy* or seven kingdoms. Among these the kingdoms of Mercia, Northumbria, Wessex, Essex, enjoyed prominence. These kingdoms were constantly at war and eventually all of them were conquered by Egbert, king of Wessex, who ruled from 802 to 839. Egbert was the first King of England.

*Conquest of
Britain by
Anglo-
Saxons
upon Roman
withdrawal*

Heptarchy

*England
united under
Egbert of
Wessex*

(g) **The Frankish Kingdom:** In the third century the Franks had their settlements west of the river Rhine. They were then in a semi-barbarous state. It was the Franks, however, who gave a new

*Franks of
two different*

<i>groups: Ripurian and Salian</i>	name to Gaul—France, and formed the nucleus of the French nation. The Franks were of two main groups—the Ripurian and the Salian Franks. The latter were more important and traced their origin from Merwing an early chief of their race. Of the several kings of this line of the Franks, Clodovech or Clovis was the most cruel and treacherous. The fall of the Roman empire gave Clovis a chance to fulfil his ambition of founding a Frankish kingdom upon the ruins of the Roman Empire. He attacked the Roman governor of Gaul and at the battle of Soissons won a decisive victory in 486 and thus cut off from the Roman empire Gaul which was conquered by Julius Caesar in the first century B.C. for the Roman Empire. Soon after Clovis conquered Paris, so-called from an ancient tribe called <i>Parisii</i> and made it his capital. After reducing the Teutonic tribes in the neighbourhood Clovis conquered the whole of Gaul. He was supported by the Church in the hope of turning the Pagan Franks into Christians. The Eastern Emperor also sent Clovis the insignia of a Roman <i>Consul</i> . Clovis was only a viceroy of the eastern emperor in name but in reality his independence was unquestioned. But Clovis' death which was followed by division of his kingdom between his sons according to the Teutonic custom of inheritance, led to dissensions and wars. The Frankish kingdom was then divided into two parts, the eastern and the western, also called Austrasia and Neustria respectively. The eastern part or Austrasia was more thoroughly Teutonic than the western or Neustria which was more Roman in its elements. The Frankish kings having been <i>rois faineants</i> in each of the two houses, there ruled a high official called Mayor of the Palace or Major Domus. After some time the Mayor of the eastern division gained ascendancy and set aside the Merovingian line and thus gave to the Frankish monarchy a new line called the Carolingian. It was from this house that Charles the Great or Charlemagne arose.
<i>Clovis—the Frankish king</i>	
<i>Clovis' conquests</i>	
<i>Rise of the Mayor of the Palace</i>	
<i>Carolingian line of kings</i>	

CHAPTER 2

The Frauks

1/ End of the Western Empire: Rise of the Frankish House: THE ROMAN EMPIRE in the West formally came to an end in 476 A.D., and in its place several barbarian kingdoms grew up. Of these the Franks were the first to rise into prominence. Clodovech or Clovis of the Merovingian house of the Salian Franks was the first to give the Frankish kingdom its definition and consolidation.

End of the Roman Empire in the West—476 A.D.

2/ Reign of Clodovech or Clovis: Clovis (481–511) inherited the Merovingian throne in 481 at the age of fifteen when the Frankish kingdom was no more than a mere corner of Gaul. Other Frankish tribes ruled over different other parts of Gaul in full independence. There were in all six independent states into which Gaul was divided at the accession of Clovis, including his own. These were the states of (1) the Salians over which Clovis ruled, (2) the Ripurians, (3) the Visigoths, (4) the Burgundians, (5) the kingdom of Syagrius, and (6) Armorica.

Clovis' kingdom—a mere corner of Gaul

Gaul divided into six independent states

The north-west Gaul under Syagrius, a noble Roman was nominally in allegiance to Rome but it was not receiving any protection from the Roman power which had become extinct. Syagrius was an object of envy to Clovis rather than of enmity, for Syagrius' merits were those of an able lawyer and a righteous judge rather than of a warrior, which earned for him a wide-spread reputation. Clovis dreaded perhaps the permanent establishment of a Roman dynasty in Gaul through the nominal allegiance in which Syagrius held himself to powerless Rome. This apart, the very integrity of the noble Roman's

Syagrius—able and righteous king of north-west Gaul



character was another reason for Clovis' choice of his earliest victim. It did not escape the cunning of Clovis that his attack on his kinsmen, that is, other Frankish kingdoms would not only receive no aid from righteous Syagrius but might have found him to oppose it. But on the other hand an attack on Syagrius would in all probability offer him a chance to excite the national spirit of his brother Franks both within and without his own territory. Hence, without waiting for a plausible ground for quarrel Clovis challenged Syagrius to the field so that their respective fates might be decided by the god of battles.

*Clovis'
attempt
against
Syagrius*

At Soissons Syagrius was completely defeated (486)* and his victor captured booties of men and money, arms and supplies, and extended his frontier to the river Loire, the boundary of the Visigoths.

*Battle of
Soissons
(486)*

For ten years to follow there was a lull in the restless career of Clovis. We cannot perhaps suppose that such a spirit as that of Clovis was really at rest. He was probably nursing his strength and watching his opportunities, for, despite his impetuosity, Clovis was not a man to engage in an undertaking without good assurance of success. In 496 A.D. Clovis resumed that career of conquest which he followed up with scarcely any intermission until his death.

*Respite of
ten years*

*Resumption
of conquest*

The Alamanni were living on the right bank of the Rhine, between the Main and the Danube but began to extend themselves till they came in collision with the Frankish subjects of King Sigebert of Cologne. Clovis flew to the assistance of his kinsmen and defeated the Alamanni in a battle in the neighbourhood of Zulpich, also known as the battle of Zulpich. He then settled a large number of his followers in the territory of the Alamanni.

*Battle of
Zulpich:
Defeat of
the Alamanni*

Clovis, although not endowed with special diplomatic skill or any special foresight, displayed a

*Foresight of
Clovis*

* See ante p. 22.

*Conversion
into Christi-
anity*

clear insight into the forces at work in his times, and by the help of the sword, shrewd calculation, faithless diplomacy and geographical instinct, understood that the only way to consolidation of the Frankish tribes and monarchy was to bring all of them under one unified control. He won over the Church to his side by his conversion to Christianity (496) under the influence of his Burgundian wife Clotilda, daughter of Chilperic. What actually had influenced Clovis to be a Christian convert has been the subject of many surmises. According to common belief, it was not the influence of his Christian wife but a miracle that changed Clovis' heart. In Zulpich when the fortune of battle was turning against him, Clovis thought of God whom his wife adored and of whose powers Clovis until then was callous despite his wife's importunities, and to his utter surprise the battle took a turn to his favour and ended in his victory. Clovis fulfilled his promise by obtaining baptism at the hands of Remigius at Rheim with three thousand of his followers.

*Sincerity of
Clovis'
conversion.
doubtful*

The sincerity of Clovis' conversion is open to question due to the unsuitability of his subsequent life and deeds to Christian principles and the discrepancy between his profession and private as well as public actions. Clovis' conscience remained undisturbed in the midst of deeds whose enormity makes one shudder. Clovis was sensible of the advantages, both political and otherwise in an open avowal of the Catholic faith. Although the immediate effect of his conversion appeared to be disastrous, in the way that some of his Frankish followers deserted him, yet in reality it brought him the following advantages.

*Advantages
of the
conversion :*

*(i) Won
affection of
Romano-
Gallic
subjects*

In the first place, his conversion to Christianity conciliated for him the zealous affection of the Romano-Gallic subjects whose superior intellect, number and immensity of wealth made their support of utmost value.

In the second place, most of his Frankish followers either viewed with indifference the change of religion of Clovis or followed suit.

(ii) Frankish followers got converted

In the third place, his conversion was advantageous or disadvantageous to him according to the object in his view insofar as his compatriot kings were concerned. If it were his intention to live in peace with them on terms of equality, the conversion would not at all be advantageous. But his aim having been to reduce them all to a state of subjection to himself, the support of the Church and the Romano-Gallic subjects was indeed an advantage. For, Clovis had the genuine spirit of the conqueror which would not brook the sight of independence. With his keen intellect and undaunted boldness he was able to see the advantages and turn them to the best account.

(iii) Use of the Church and Romano-Gallic subjects to own advantage

Lastly, the large number of the Christians who were in heathen kingdoms of the Continent looked upon Clovis with hope and this gave the latter the support of a vast community of Catholic Christians.

Clovis looked upon with hope by Catholics

The fortunate results of the conversion were not long to come. In the year following (497 A.D.) the Armoricans, who inhabited the country between the Seine and Loire and defended themselves stoutly against the heathen Franks, submitted with utmost readiness to the royal convert.

Willing submission to Clovis by Christian Armoricans

Three years later (500 A.D.) Clovis reduced the Burgundians to a state of semi-independence, after a fierce battle with the Burgundian king Gundobald at *Dijon* on the river Ouche.

Burgundians reduced to semi-independence

Clovis' war against the Visigoths under their king Alaric was more or less a religious war and as he marched into the country, spontaneous support from the Christian Church and community made it easy. The priests and Bishops did not hesitate to

Clovis' war against Alaric

manifest their sympathies openly for Clovis only to be expelled from their Sees by Alaric, *but many more while reticent gave him their moral support. Alaric became soon conscious of his weakness and retired before his terrible foe with the vain hope of receiving assistance from the Ostrogoths.

*Clovis given
titles of:
Patricius
and Consul
by the East
Roman
Emperor*

Shortly after these events Clovis received the titles of Roman *Patricius* and *Consul* from the Emperor Anastasius (of the Eastern Empire). The meaning of these obsolete titles has never been sufficiently explained. But the fact that important Frankish kings like Clovis, Pipin, Charlemagne condescended to accept such honours gives us a clear impression that although the sun of Rome was set, the twilight of her greatness still rested on the world.

*Clovis' march
against the
Theodoric
the Great —
his Ostrogoth
rival*

In the same year (507–08) Clovis marched against his Ostrogoth rival Theodoric the Great. Although the divergent accounts of the annalists leave us in doubt about the victory, the account given by Julian, and considered trustworthy on circumstantial evidence, at least shows that Clovis received a decisive and bloody defeat at the hands of the Ostrogoths.

*Checked by the
Ostrogoths
Clovis turned
against
Sigebert of
Cologne*

Having received a check at the hands of the Ostrogoths Clovis' ambition of territorial expansion sought an outlet in the destruction of his supporter and ally Sigebert of Cologne. Realising that he would but receive feeble support from his own men in his attempt to despoil the Frankish house of Cologne—the house of the Ripurian Franks) and even other Frankish houses would not allow it or rather stand by Sigebert, Clovis thought of destroying the ruling house. He roused the ambition and cupidity in the minds of Clotaire or Clotaric to obtain his father's throne by murdering him. Clotaire killed his father and foolishly shared the blood-stained treasure with Clovis. The latter in his usual cunning affected a feeling of horror at this

*Clovis'
machinations*

unnatural crime and procured immediate assassination of Clotaire. Clovis now offered himself to be the successor of Clotaire and promised recognition of all rights enjoyed by the Ripurian Franks. In 509, Clovis was elected king of Cologne and he was acclaimed with general rejoicing.

*Clovis
successor
of Clotaire*

The treatment of his greatest ally and kinsman—the house of Cologne, left nothing to hope from him except ruthless destruction so far as other Frankish houses were concerned. Chararic and Ragnachar were naturally to be the next victims. By winning over the followers of Chararic, Clovis got him and his son into his own hands and caused them to be cut off. Clovis likewise bribed the followers of Ragnachar with armour of gilded iron which they mistook, as he intended they should, for gold and thus having crippled his enemy in his own country, Clovis marched against him. Ragnachar prepared to meet the invader but was betrayed by his own men and handed over to Clovis who ordered his death which was done in an inhumanly cruel manner, namely by splitting his skull with an axe. Two brothers of Ragnachar were also put to death. Having killed many other kings who were his kinsmen, because he feared they might deprive him of his power, he extended his kingdom through the whole of Gaul and himself died at Paris in 511 A.D. at the forty-fifth year of his reign after an eventful career.

*Destruction
of other
Frankish
houses by
Clovis*

*Extension of
Clovis'
Kingdom
over whole
of Gaul
His death
in 511 A.D.*

It is difficult to pass any categorical judgment on the character of Clovis. There was no dearth of panegyrist to record the achievements of Clovis in appreciative terms. His conversion to Christianity, and services rendered to it by uniting the territories of his heathen kinsmen under his control and thereby bringing about the unity of the dispersed Christian communities living in those countries, made many, including historian Gregory of Tours

*Character of
Clovis*

*His cruelty
and treachery*

—a bishop himself, to connive at or condone many of the inhuman cruelties perpetrated by Clovis. His treachery, his cruelty, his many other foul sins had been shrouded from the peoples' gaze by the admirers of Clovis. But to history it remains to record that he had, indeed, without the slightest provocation deprived nobles of their power and lives. He had treacherously murdered many of his royal kindred including Sigebert, his benefactor. He had shown himself on all occasions, a heartless ruffian, a blood-thirsty tyrant and a greedy conqueror. All the same, to the Catholic Church his services were great. He led the way to the triumph of Catholicism; saved the Roman church of heresy and paganism and planted it on a rock in the very heart of Europe.

*His services
to Catholic
Church*

*His achieve-
ments*

There were other achievements which may serve to reconcile us to his memory. The importance of the task, namely of uniting western Europe, which he succeeded in performing and the influence of his reign over the destinies of Europe cannot be over-emphasised. He founded the monarchy on a strong, enduring basis and levelled with a ruthless hand all the barriers that separated Franks from Franks, and united into a nation all the sections of mutually hostile tribes. Despite the fact that this unity was soon disturbed by division, the idea of its feasibility and desirableness was deeply impressed on the national mind. A return to this unity was often aimed at and sometimes achieved during subsequent ages. From a small kingdom comprising a fraction of Gaul Clovis built up quite a large kingdom, gave it an improved administration of the Roman type—a better religion, Christianity, and thereby like Constantine built up political as well as religious unity for a kingdom which was to last with occasional breaks, the life times of kings in succession and was destined to be centre of a revived empire in 800 A.D. under Charlemagne.

*Building up
of a large
kingdom from
a small one :
Roman type
of adminis-
tration—
better
religion*

3/ Successors of Clovis: Pursuant to the Teutonic custom the kingdom of Clovis was divided among his four sons into almost equal portions. Theodoric took Rheims, Chlodomer Orleans, Childebert Paris and Chlotar Soissons. As it lay in human nature, these four parts of the Frankish kingdom entered into a serious fratricidal conflict and their greed made the four brothers bitter and faithless enemies mutually. On the death of Chlodomer (524), Childebert and Chlotar murdered his two sons and took away his share. But fortune played a greater part in leaving Chlotar the sole king of Franconia, for Childebert's line extinct with his death in 558 and Theodoric's with the death of his utterly incapable and debauched grandson Theodebald in 555, Chlotar was now the sole surviving Merovingian king of Franconia. Although the four brothers were mutually bitterest enemies, in external affairs they worked in unison and conquered Burgundy, obtained Provence from the Ostrogoths, reduced Thuringians of central Germany. Theodoric's son Theodebert, the ablest son of the family, who died prematurely, raided Italy and even planned a coalition of all barbarians against the Eastern Empire. However, the plan did not take practical shape.

*Division of
Clovis'
kingdom
among his
four sons :*

*Fratricidal
struggle*

*In foreign
conquest four
brothers
acted in
unison :
Conquest of
Burgundy,
Provence
and
Thuringia*

For three years from 558–61 Chlotar ruled over the entire Frankish kingdom as its sole king. But on his death in 561 the kingdom was again divided among his sons. Charibert was the master of Paris, Sigebert of Metz and Chilperic of Soissons, and Guntraman of Burgundy. These grandsons of Clovis were bitter rivals mutually and their cruelty combined with their lustful orgies made the whole political drama for years to follow not only scandalous and blood-spilling but ruinous to the Frankish kingdom organised by Clovis. Chilperic, of all monstrous brothers, was no less so, yet he possessed both brains and education. His order contrary to established laws and conventions both secular and

*Chlotar sole
king of
Frankish
kingdom
558–61
Division of
kingdom on
Chlotar's
death*

Chilperic

*His evil
eminence*

*Chlotar II
(584-629)*

ecclesiastical, showed signs of his philosophic mind. He permitted women to inherit land under certain conditions, which the Salic law did not otherwise permit. He ordered that the word of God was to be used instead of the orthodox formulas. He acquired some scholarship in Latin and composed hymns and added letters to the alphabet. Yet his cruelty was monstrous and blood-curdling. Blinding was the punishment that he prescribed for disobedience to his edicts. Chilperic, even among the Merovingians, stood on an evil eminence. He was avaricious and cruel, debauched and gluttonous. He did not hesitate to kill his first wife to marry a second, yet was under the influence of his concubine Fredegund. In 584 Chilperic's boisterous career came to a close on his murder and Fredegund began ruling in the name of her child Chlotar II (584-629). The unedifying scramble for power and gains came to an end with the extinction or defeat of other rival lines mostly under the influence of women. Chlotar II now became the sole king of Franconia. But this was not due to the capacity of Chlotar II but due to the treason of the Austrasian and Burgundian nobles who betrayed their own ruling houses and brought about their fall. The services rendered by the Austrasian and Burgundian nobles had to be amply rewarded and Chlotar had to accept the programme of the nobles and diminish his own authority.

*Austrasia
and
Burgundy*

The Austrasians and Burgundians who had combined with him to destroy their ruling houses were now placed under the Dukes Warnachar and Ratho, who were made the mayors of the palace of the two realms, namely Austrasia and Burgundy. These mayors of the palace had it stipulated that they would hold office for life and not during the king's pleasure. The office of the mayor of the palace became far more important than what it yet had been and eventually became a challenge to the royal authority.

This apart, the practice now initiated of law-making by the king with the counsel and consent of bishops, counts and dukes was another step in the weakening of the kingship. A code of laws passed by Chlotar II for the Swabians in 620 A.D. was endorsed not merely with his own authority but with that of thirty-three bishops, thirty-four dukes and sixty-five counts. Chlotar II's reign was exceptionally fertile in legislation. This was due not to the law-making aptitude of Chlotar II but to meet the demands that the nobles made to redress their grievances. The information that we have of Chlotar's meeting with mayor of the palace Warnachar and the great men of Burgundy and assenting to their just petitions shows, as Oman observes "that he was facing an irremovable mayor of the palace and a nation who had freely given themselves to his hands on stated terms and had no longer over them the unlimited authority—that a Chlodovech (Clovis) or a Theuderich (Theodoric) had owned a hundred years before."

*Chlotar's
Code of laws
for the
Swabians*

*Importance of
the post of
the Mayor of
the palace*

Nothing could be more demonstrative of the weakness of Chlotar II than an open brawl in the national Assembly that he had summoned at Clichy towards the end of his reign, of the Austrasians and Burgundians. Swords were drawn and the steward of the palace of king's son was slain which gave rise to a riot. Chlotar was only able to keep the peace by inducing the Burgundians to stand by him. He could neither punish the murderer nor those who began rioting. He dismissed the assembly.

*National
Assembly of
Chlotar*

Chlotar II with his diminished royal prerogatives had neither the power nor the opportunity to extend his dominions. He was a passive spectator to the rise of a new kingdom although ephemeral, of the Slavs under Samo—a Frankish adventurer. Samo by gradual steps extended his power all down the valley of the Elbe, on both sides of the Bohemian

*Weakness
and dimi-
nished
royalty of
Chlotar II*

mountains and soon became a serious menace to the Merovingian realm.

*Dagobert I
succeeded
Chlotar II*

Towards the end of his reign Chlotar placed his young son Dagobert on the throne of Austrasia. Dagobert was assisted by Arnulf, bishop of Metz and Pipin the Elder, the ancestors of the Carolingian house. On the death of Chlotar II (628–29) his son Dagobert I became ruler of all the Frankish realms.

*Dagobert—
a creditable
Merovingian
ruler
(629–39)*

Dagobert (629–39) was, however, a creditable ruler of the Merovingian house. His personal life not beyond reproach. He lived with three wives at once and flew into occasional outbursts of wrongheadedness. To begin with, he shared his kingdom with his brother Charibert whom he made the king of Aquitaine out of brotherly affection. But on the latter's death he took over the rule of Aquitaine disregarding the claims of Charibert's three sons (630). Dagobert was the last of the Merovingians who was more than a figurehead and whose will was of much importance in the ordering of the Frankish realm. His successors were all *rois faineants*. Even in Dagobert's time the royal power was of little consequence in Austrasia where Pipin (also spelt Pcpin, Pippin) who with his son-in-law held the post of mayor of the palace and exercised real power of government almost all throughout the reign of Dagobert. Dagobert had several occasions for being very much displeased with Pipin but dared not to depose him from the mayoralty. In Neustria the office of the mayor of the palace had not yet arisen and Dagobert both reigned and ruled there. Dagobert was the last Merovingian who tried to extend Merovingian dominion and the Frankish power. He assisted Sisinand a pretender to the Spanish throne, made alliance with Emperor Heraclius against the Lombards, entered into a protracted war with the Slavs of the east. On the Elbe he fought against Samo, the Frank. Dagobert I died in 639 leaving two sons Sigibert III and Clovis or Chlodovech II.

*Shared his
kingdom with
his brother
Charibert*

*Dagobert's
royal power
of little
consequence
—Mayor of
the palace
real ruler*

*Sigibert III
and Clovis
II succeeded
Dagobert I*

Sigibert and Clovis, both were minors, the former aged nine, the latter only six. The long minority of the successors of Dagobert caused the ruin of the Merovingian monarchy. "They were a dynasty of children sometimes of apocryphal Merovingian blood nominated by the mayors of the palace who ruled. They died young, worn out by precocious debauchery in their secluded *villae* (villa). At long intervals they appeared before their people in the traditional chariot drawn by oxen. Otherwise they were shadows who provided dates for charters."

*Ruin of the
Merovingian
Monarchy*

In Austrasia, King Sigibert III was a *rois faineant* and the great nobles were firmly in power. On his death, Angegis, son of Bishop Arnulf of Metz was succeeded by Grimoald, son of Pipin or Pepin, as mayor of the palace, and on Sigibert's death proclaimed his own son king of Austrasia after having sent Dagobert II, son of Sigibert to an Irish monastery. But this was too much for the Franks to tolerate, they would not endure a king, who was not a Merovingian. Grimoald was delivered to the king of Neustria to be put to death.

*In Austrasia
great nobles
held power
Grimoald—
Mayor of the
palace:
Sigibert's
son Dagobert
removed from
the throne*

The whole Frankish Empire was thus re-united, although apparently under Clovis II. But not long after, Clovis II died and under his son and successor Clotaire or Chlotar III, the kingdom was ruled over with ability and success. But the separatist tendency of Austrasians made them eager to have a separate *rois faineant* and another son of Clovis II—Childeric II was placed on the Austrasian throne with Wulfwald as the mayor of the palace.

*Re-union of
Austrasia
and Neustria
under Clovis
II
Clovis II's
sons Chlotar
III king of
Neustria and
Childeric II
king of
Austrasia*

On Chlotar III's death (670) the whole Frankish empire fell into confusion due to the limitless ambition of his mayor of the palace Ebroin who tried to place Thierry III, Chlotar's youngest brother—a mere child on the throne, so that he himself might continue to reign in his name. But the nobles rose against Ebroin and drove him and the child king

*Confusion on
Chlotar's
death*

*Childeric
King of
both
Neustria and
Austrasia* from power. The crown of Neustria was offered to Childeric II, King of Austrasia who took immediate possession of the whole of Neustria. Ebroin sought refuge in a monastery. But Childeric's attempt to control the nobles led to a conspiracy against him and his mayor of the palace Wulfwald. Childeric II was put to death with his queen and Wulfwald escaped with difficulty to Austrasia. The nobles now placed Childebert III, another son of Childeric II on the throne. But the royal party brought forward Thierry from the monastery and succeeded in making good his claim. Ebroin now came out of his refuge and through cunning and conspiracy forced himself upon Thierry as the mayor of the palace of Neustria.

*Childebert
III put on
the throne by
the nobles*

*Dagobert
recalled to
the throne
of Austrasia* In the meantime Dagobert II was recalled and placed on the throne of Austrasia only to fall victim to the machinations of Ebroin and the pro-Neustrian faction who aimed at bringing the whole of the Empire under their arbitrary power.

*Two capable
leaders:
Duke Martin
and Pipin
of Heristal* **4/ Pipin of Heristal:** Austrasia had, however, two capable leaders Duke Martin and Pipin of Heristal, who had been in the services of the king under the administration of Wulfwald. These two leaders were making preparations for defending Austrasia against an expected attack by the Neustrians. But Ebroin's quick attack before their preparations were complete, compelled Duke Martin to take refuge in the town of Laon. But his enemy Ebroin lured him from his retreat to his destruction with the help of the bishops of Paris and Rheims. Pipin was, however, neither to be cajoled nor frightened to submission. Pipin enlisted the support of a large number of the Neustrian exiles whom Ebroin had either dishonoured or otherwise offended. When the situation was ripe for a collision between Ebroin and Pipin of Heristal, the former's assassination (681) by Hermenfoid, a distinguished Neustrian Frank, set the matter

*Expected
attack by
Neustria*

at rest. Ebroin was succeeded by Waratto as mayor of the palace of Neustria who was inclined to be in peace with Pipin of Austrasia. But Waratto was dispossessed of his power temporarily by the son, Ghislemar who was a sworn enemy of Pipin. But Ghislemar's death in 684 brought his father Waratto to power and hostilities between Austrasia and Neustria ceased for a time. But on Waratto's death Bercher succeeded him as mayor of the palace, whose insolence and total disregard for the feelings and wishes of the people compelled the Neustrians to join hands with Pipin. Pipin prepared for war against Neustria in scrupulous consultation with the Austrasians.

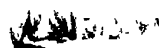
*Temporary
cessation of
hostilities
between
Austrasia
and Neustria*

While the armies of both sides were poised against each other Pipin showed reluctance to begin a bloody battle with his kindred people and sent emissaries demanding restoration of church properties despoiled by the tyrant mayor of the palace. King Thierry and his mayor Bercher construed this peace offer as weakness and fear on the part of Pipin and returned a haughty answer. The fierce but brief battle that followed put Thierry and Bercher to flight. The latter was killed by his own men and the king Thierry was taken prisoner, but his life was spared. This battle is known as the battle of *Textri* which was an important event in the history of the Franks, for it had administered a death blow to the Merovingian dynasty.

*Battle of
Textri:
A deathblow
to the
Merovingian
dynasty*

From this time onward the kings began to have only royal names but not the royal dignity. "The race of the Merovingians from which the Franks were formerly accustomed to choose their kings, is generally considered to have ended with Chilperic." Nothing was left of the king except a seat on the royal throne, contenting himself with keeping long hair, unshorn beard, hearing ambassadors and on their departure to communicate to them whatever answer he was taught to send.

*Merovingian
monarchy
—a phantom
of kingship*



<p><i>Effects of the battle of Textri:</i> <i>Pipin master of Austrasia, Neustria and Burgundy</i></p>	<p>The victory of <i>Textri</i> had thrown Austrasia, Neustria and Burgundy into the hands of Pipin who showed his wisdom and moderation, intellect and vigour in his subsequent career. He was free from vanity and took no delight in empty show of power but was conscious of the realities of his power. He kept Thierry on the throne and ruled in his name and united both reason and prejudice in the support of the government for he was wise enough to gauge the reverence for the royal house in the breast of the common people. Yet some approach was made to invest Pipin with some measure of sovereignty. His years of administration with reckoned as also those of the king in the public documents. Pipin put Drogo and Grimoald—his two sons as mayors in two other divisions of the empire, himself staying at Austrasia. He restored the assembly of the <i>Campus Martins</i>, a purely German institution which brought him both power and popularity. In the meetings of this assembly, held annually on first of March, the whole nation would assemble to discuss measures for the ensuing year. It may be easily understood that no ruler who is not confident of his power over his people and of his honest desire for welfare of his people can possibly voluntarily submit to the decisions of such an assembly.</p>
<p><i>Pipin's sons Drogo and Grimoald Mayors in Neustria and Burgundy</i></p>	
<p><i>Pipin's honest desire for welfare of his people</i></p>	
<p><i>Submission of recalcitrants:</i> <i>Love of the people</i></p>	<p>Pipin's extraordinary ability and practical sense enabled him to secure submission of the recalcitrant nobles, and the love of the people. He was looked upon as the man who could save people from anarchy. Having set the house in order, Pipin turned his attention to the re-establishment of the Frankish Empire in its full extent. This was necessary, for, the Frankish Empire was in the process of dissolution and most of the tribes, particularly those situated distantly as the Bavarians, Frisians, Bretons, Alamanni, Gascons, etc., had virtually recovered their independence. The long misgovernment and internal feud were the causes of this partial decline</p>

of the Frankish Empire, but fortunately it did not mean any decline in the martial spirit of the Franks. In Pipin the Frankish people found the leadership and unity necessary to give them the hegemony over all the German tribes and to prepare them for the conquest of Europe. In 697 the Frisians were subdued, the Alamanni (Swabians) were defeated. Pipin's wars with different German tribes did not make him unmindful of his work at home. He succeeded well in preserving peace at home and consolidating the foundations of the later Carolingian throne. Pipin was also an apostle of Christian faith. The civil governors whom he appointed in the conquered provinces were under specific instruction to do everything in their power to promote Christianity by peaceful means and to be responsible for the lives of the pious missionaries.

*Pipin gave
unity and
leadership to
his people*

*Foundations
of later
Carolingian
throne
consolidated*

During the long twenty years of Pipin's brilliant part as administrator as mayor of the palace the pale shadows of the phantom Merovingian kings were flitting gloomily across the scene. Nothing except their names is known. Thierry III died in 691, Clovis III his successor in 695, and Childebert III who followed Clovis III died in 711 and when Pipin himself died, Dagobert III was the nominal ruler on the throne of the Frankish empire.

*Merovingians
phantom
kings*

*Dagobert
nominal ruler*

When the authority of the Frankish king extended no farther than the sword could reach, when law was weak, when the feudal aristocracy was struggling for independence and brought the empire to the verge of anarchy, Pipin's ability and courage, wisdom and moderation succeeded in bringing peace within and power without. The Frankish empire's foundations were repaired and restored to the strength which easily bore the weight of the mighty empire that was to rise not at a distant future. By the extraordinary influence of his personal character he succeeded in curbing the turbulent spirits of the very men who had raised him to his proud eminence and

*Pipin
brought peace
within and
power with-
out*

aided him to establish his authority over the line of the ancient kings.

*Treachery
reared its
head when
Pipin lay
dying*

When in 714 Pipin lay almost dying, treachery and conspiracy raised their heads and Pipin's sons who were the mayors of the palace of Neustria and Burgundy were assassinated. But like one resurrected, Pipin recovered temporarily to fully avenge himself of the murder of his sons. The conspirators were amply punished and Pipin, as if according to the principle of hereditary succession, chose an infant and illegitimate son of Grimoald to the joint mayoralty of Burgundy and Neustria. This fact itself showed the absolute mastery he had obtained over the phantom Merovingian kings and the turbulent nobles; to the conspirators he looked like one who had repassed the gates of death to hurl destruction on their heads. It was after ensuring all this that Pipin went to eternal rest in December, 714.

*Death of
Pipin (714)*

*Pipin's son
through his
second wife:
Charles
Martel*

5/ Charles Martel (714-82): Pipin's two own-up sons Grimoald and Drogo through his first wife did not survive him. But his real successor arose out of his second wife (a concubine), and this was none else than the renowned Charles Martel.

*Pipin's first
wife's bid
for setting
her child-
grandson on
the throne*

Death of Pipin was a signal for the long-gathering storm, to burst with tremendous fury. Pipin's first wife wanted to rule as the guardian of her infant grandson who was placed to the joint mayoralty of Burgundy and Neustria. She succeeded in seizing the person of her step-son Charles (later on earning the epithet 'Martel') who was naturally her most formidable rival. But the Burgundians and the Neustrians were most reluctant to be under another female regency, refused obedience to her command and endeavoured to excite the puppet King Dagobert to throw off the Austrasian or German yoke. Plec-trudis, step-mother of Charles Martel and Theud-wald were defeated by the Neustrians who now chose Ratbod the heathen king of Frisia as their ally who

*Charles
Martel's
person seized
by his step-
mother*

had regained independence after Pipin's death. The attack of the Neustrians on Austrasia and laying waste with fire and sword as far as the river Maas had one important result. In the confusion Charles Martel escaped from custody and many of the Austrasians willingly stood by this youthful hero. Within a very short time Charles found himself at the head of a very efficient army, though not numerous. His path was beset with numerous odds and any man of a lesser calibre would have succumbed to these.

*Charles
Martel
escaped—
Austrasians
stood by him*

In the meantime Dagobert died and the Neustrians disregarding the claims of his son, put Daniel, reputed to be a son of Childeric on the throne under the name of Chilperic II. This king was less imbecile than his immediate predecessors and planned to attack Cologne in alliance with the Frisian King. But Charles Martel fell upon the Frisians and after a prolonged but indecisive fighting both sides retreated on equal terms.

Chilperic II

After this, Charles' career was one of uninterrupted success against every foe who dared withstand him. In early spring of 717 he invaded Neustria and defeated Chilperic II at Vincy and chased the Neustrians up to the gates of Paris. He then compelled his step-mother Plectrudis to surrender Cologne to him and dispersed her partisans. His success made him master of the eastern kingdom and he now placed a certain Chlotar on the throne and made himself his mayor of the palace. Chlotar IV, as he was called, was perhaps a grandson of Dagobert II, the Irish exile. He was no more than a phantom king and a puppet in the hands of the mayor of the palace.

*Uninterrupt-
ed success of
Charles
Martel*

Charles' next task was to humble all enemies that had vexed Austrasia in times of its trouble. He compelled Ratbod to surrender west Friesland, drove the Saxons over the Weser and then turned

*Battle of
Soissons*

against Neustria. Chilperic with his ally Eudo, independent Duke of Aquitaine vainly tried to maintain his independence. Charles defeated them both in the battle of Soissons and chased them beyond the river Loire. The victory at Soissons was the last effort of the Merovingian house and of Neustria to maintain independence. After this battle was lost Neustria bowed to the will of the mayor of the palace.

*Death of
Chlotar IV*

In 718 died the puppet ruler Chlotar IV and well might Charles declare himself king. But Charles' wisdom taught him moderation and he brought Chilperic whom he had defeated at Soissons on the throne of Neustria and got himself recognised as mayor of the palace of both the eastern and western parts, *i.e.* Neustria and Austrasia—of the Empire (719). Humbled and defeated Merovingian Chil-

*Theodoric
IV last but
one of rois
faineants*

peric II was not destined to be under the tutelage of his mayor of the palace for long. He died in 720. The effeteness of the puppet Merovingian successors became all the more pronounced. Theodoric IV was placed on the throne as a decoration and everything relating to the administration of the kingdom, everything that had to be done either at home or abroad, was cared for by the mayor of the palace. Theodoric IV kept himself seated on the throne from 720–37 after which a period of six years elapsed when Charles did not bother to put anybody even as a nominal king but ruled on his own authority.

*After
Theodoric IV
throne kept
vacant by
Charles
Martel*

By far the greatest achievement of Charles Martel was his defence of the Frankish realm against the Mahommedan attacks from Spain. It was his repeated pounding of the Mahommedans that earned him the epithet 'Martel' which means 'hammer'. His greatest victory was gained over the Moslems of Spain. Eudo of Aquitaine ably held them back for a few years but in 732 a new governor Abd-ar-Rahman, resumed the offensive. He defeated Eudo in a first engagement, sacked and burnt the town of

*Battle of
Tours*

Bordeaux and advanced past Poitiers to Tours. Here came Charles to the rescue of Eudo at the head of his combined Franks, Belgians, Germans, etc., to be the saviour of the Christendom. The contest with Abd-ar-Rahman was long and bloody, and utmost valour was displayed by the two armies. After six days' skirmishing Charles won a decisive victory over Abd-ar-Rahman who was killed in action. The white tents of the Arabs extending as far as the eye could reach were left with none living. Christendom was thus saved and pope and monk, prince and peasant hastened to the churches for thanksgiving for this deliverance.

*Charles
Martel
saviour of
the Christen-
dom*

This far-famed victory of Charles Martel spread consternation all throughout the Mahommedan world and the Moslem onrush was spent up.

*Moslem
onrush was
stopped*

The importance of Charles Martel's victory has often been enlarged upon and, in fact, can hardly be exaggerated. The fate of Europe was hanging on the sword of the Frankish mayor and but for him and his bold German soldiers, the Crescent would have been carried into the very heart of Europe. The Western civilisation might have been submerged by that of Islam. Martel's defeat would have left the Moslems master of Europe and the heart of Europe might even now be in possession of the Moslems, and "the mosque and the harem might stand where now we see spire of the Christian church, and the home of the Christian family."

*Importance
of Charles
Martel's
victory*

The victory of Tours was not the end of troubles for Charles Martel. The Neustrians and the Burgundians were far from being reconciled to the supremacy which the German Franks had acquired over them under the mighty Carolingian mayors. They were so much jealous of Charles Martel's success that even when he was engaged in a fight that was to decide whether the heart of Europe was to remain under the Christendom or pass into

*Troubles
persisted*

the hands of the Saracens, the Neustrians and Burgundians raised a rebellion in his rear. But Charles Martel was not the man to sleep on the fresh laurels he had won. Fresh from the slaughter of the infidels he marched into Burgundy. The domestic foes received adequate retribution at his hands and he then placed in all important posts such persons who might be relied on, in the hours of danger (733).

*Conversion
of the
Frisians to
Christianity*

In the year following Charles Martel subjugated, and what was even more difficult, converted the Frisians who hated Christianity. They were attacked both by land and sea and after defeat were given the alternative of either adopting Christianity or courting death. He was an Alfred in his dealings with the Frisians.

*Saracens
repelled from
South Gaul*

In 737 the Saracens were once more introduced into the south of Gaul by the treachery of Christians. Mairontus, aiming at an independent Dukedom formed a strong party among the Neustrians who hated and detested the German mayors. But the Saracens were eventually repelled. According to some, Charles Martel was assisted on this occasion by Liutprand, king of the Lombards in Italy with whom he formed a close alliance.

*Saxon
inroads
stemmed*

The activities of the enemies in the north prevented Charles Martel to pursue his advantages against the Moslems. The Saxons led inroads which Charles Martel had to repel with heavy slaughter.

*Pope Gregory
III's appeal
to Charles
Martel for
help against
the Lombards*

A new theatre of Charles Martel's activities was in the preparation. The Lombards were enemies of the Pope and the Romans and they, under their King Liutprand appeared very near to the gates of Rome. Pope Gregory III appealed for help to Charles Martel (739) for assistance. The appeal was, however, made with considerable misgivings about the consequences, but there was no way out. The fear and hesitation on the part of Pope Gregory III was due to his instinctive dread of giving the

Papal chair so powerful a protector and partly due to his knowledge of the friendship between Charles and Liutprand. Nothing was perhaps more threatening to the Papal dreams of temporal independence and spiritual domination than the possibility of a Franks-Lombard alliance.

Frankish-Lombardian alliance

Gregory appealed to Charles when he was resting from the fatigues of his late campaigns. But he received the Papal appeal with great reverence. Yet it was difficult for Charles to lead his army to a distant country against a friend whose help he received only recently and might have to ask for in future as well. Charles intervened and persuaded Liutprand to withdraw on condition that the Romans should not interfere between himself and his rebellious subjects.

Charles Martel's intervention

In the following year (740) the Lombards were again before the gates of Rome and the Pope was once more a suppliant at the Frankish Court to make his appeal more weighty. Pope Gregory sent the keys of the holy sepulchre to Charles thereby making him symbolically the protector of the Holy See. The conferment of the title of *Roman Patricius* was tantamount to Gregory's acknowledging Charles Martel as liege lord of Roman Duchy and people. This also meant a breach in the relation with the Eastern Empire to which Rome really belonged. Charles' intervention once again delivered the Pope and Rome from destruction at the hands of Liutprand.

Charles Martel, Protector of the Church

Restless activities spread over years had prematurely worn out Charles Martel. Feeling that his end was near, he put himself to the task of setting his house in order. Scarcely he had portioned out his vast empire among his sons and made peace with heaven that he died (October, 741).

Partitioning the empire before death

History has not done justice to Charles Martel. Deeds which in full light of history would have been sufficient to make a dozen warriors immortal have

Charles Martel's achievements

been dismissed in a few words by the Frankish chroniclers. "His greatness indeed shines forth even from their meagre notices, but we feel, as we read them that had a Caesar or a Livy unfolded his character and described his exploits, a rival might be found for Caesar, the Scipios and the Hannibals." Charles Martel was the restorer of Frankish hegemony. The dukedom of Alamanni was absorbed by him in the Frankish empire. The Bavarians were checked, Burgundians reconciled to the Frankish rule and the Saxons beaten off with heavy slaughter. But by far his greatest achievement was his victory over the Saracens at Tours (732). He was the saviour of Europe and Christianity. But for this victory the Crescent would have been carried into the heart of Europe and mosques would have been seen in place of the spires of the Christian churches, and harem in place of Christian home.

*A friend of
the Church*

Charles Martel was a friend of the Church and it was his sword, more than anything else that led to the conversion of the Frisians who hated Christianity. His intervention twice had saved the Pope and Rome from the impending destruction at the hands of Liutprand the king of the Lombards. The Pope Gregory's handing over of the keys of the holy sepulchre to Charles Martel and investing him with the title of *Roman Patricius* made Charles the symbolic protector of the holy see and the liege lord of Rome. This alliance was to be of great and far-reaching consequence in the subsequent history of the relationship between the Carolingians and the Papacy.

*Three sons:
Carloman,
Pipin the
Short and
Grifo*

6/ Carloman and Pipin the Short: Charles Martel left two sons Carloman and Pipin the Short by his first wife and a third son Grifo by the captive Bavarian princess Swanahild. Before his death he partitioned his empire between his two sons Carloman and Pipin. Carloman was given Austrasia, Swabia (Alamanni) and Thuringia; and Neustria,

Burgundy and Provence went to Pipin. But the entreaties of his second wife changed the mind of Charles Martel who at the very end of his life gave a share to his third son Grifo cutting out portions from Carloman and Pipin's shares. This second partition only brought destruction upon Grifo who received the fatal gift.

*Charles
Martel
partitioned
his empire
between
Carloman
and Pipin*

The subjects of Grifo were discontented at being arbitrarily separated from the rest of the empire. The ill-feeling of signors and the people was all the more increased by their prejudice to Swanahild, mother of Grifo whom they regarded as Charles Martel's concubine. To add to the mischievous effects of the second partition Hiltrude, sister of Carloman and Pipin flew to the court of Bavaria and got married with Otilo the Duke of that country. This made Carloman and Pipin openly hostile to both Grifo and Swanahild whom they looked upon as instigators of the unwelcome alliance of Hiltrude with the Bavarian court. Both Carloman and Pipin appeared before the fortress of Laon wherein both Grifo and his mother shut themselves up. Resistance being impossible in a country where all the subjects were hostile to them, Grifo and Swanahild surrendered, the former to be imprisoned in a castle in the forest of Ardennes and the latter to be sent to a nunnery. The mischievous effects of the second partition of the empire by Charles Martel were in this way done away with.

*Second
partition*

*Hostilities
between
Grifo and
Carloman-
Pipin*

*Grifo's
defeat*

Charles Martel with his extraordinary ability and prestige managed to rule without a Merovingian figurehead. But his two sons Carloman and Pipin without his power or prestige and taught by the turbulence of the first two years of their rule thought it safe to give legitimacy to their rule by placing Merovingian Childeric III (743-51) on the throne. The two brothers acted in harmony and warred against the Swabians, Bavarian Duke Otilo, Duke of Aquitaine and the Saxon raiders. In 747 Carlo-

*Childeric III
—the last
Merovingian
rois faineant*

*Abdication
of Carloman
—Pipin
master of the
whole empire*

*Grifo's
collusion with
the Saxons
leader
Theodoric*

*Theodoric
taken prisoner*

*Recalcitrant
dukes and
other
opponents
subdued*

*Secularisation
of the Church*

man became a monk and abdicated his mayoralty of Austrasia. The whole empire now passed under Pipin—surnamed, *the Short*. Pipin took his brother's dominions to the exclusion of his nephew's (Carloman's son) claim. Grifo had in the meantime been freed and he became a rebel always siding with rebellious subjects of Pipin. He allied himself with the Saxons whose leader was Theodoric, but Pipin took the field against the Saxons who were always ready to rise against the Franks. Theodoric was taken prisoner and the Saxons were defeated and many taken captives. Grifo again made a stand on the river Oker only to fail and fly away to Bavaria expecting a sure welcome there. Pipin directed his march towards Bavaria. But despite the support Grifo received in Bavaria from Sintger and Lanfreid, there was no encounter between the Franks and the Bavarians, for the latter realising the futility of putting up any resistance against the turbulent Franks surrendered themselves to Pipin. Pipin treated the enemies leniently and made them swear allegiance to him and restored them to their dominions.

The significance of Pipin's continued struggle against the recalcitrant local dukes and malcontents and the success he had attained in it, was that the bitter opposition to the Carolingian house by both lay and clerical malcontents was finally overcome. Pipin possessed a degree of settled authority which neither his father nor his grandfather had enjoyed.

The mayoralty of Pipin is particularly noteworthy for the secularisation of the church and the church properties, a practice into which Charles Martel was driven by his necessities of bestowing clerical offices and the church properties to his followers. Even a rigid disciplinarian like Boniface, the most pious churchman of the time, tacitly agreed to the use of church properties for military needs of the country. But his piety, and the religious and ecclesiastical spirit diffused by Boniface and his school

among the people and the clergymen, gradually generated a repugnance to the lay men's masquerading as churchmen. Pipin also shared his repugnance, yet the needs of the time compelled him to bring the church to the participation in the public burden, specially in view of the fact that the church held a very large portion of the national wealth. Pipin and Boniface came to a compromise at the synod of Lestines where the assembled bishops consented, in consideration of the urgent necessities of the state to surrender voluntarily a portion of the funds of the church on condition that the secular authority should in future refrain from interfering in the discipline and property of the church. This secularisation of a vast fund helped Pipin to establish the Carolingian throne on a firm basis and the landed properties that were received from the Church helped him to make *beneficial grants* to the nobles to secure their services.

*Church made
to share state
burden*

*Advantage of
secularisation
of the Church*

It should be remembered that Charles Martel, Carloman and Pipin were not kings although they led vast armies, received oaths of allegiance from conquered kings and princes. Even Carloman and Pipin did not think that time had come when they might dispense with the Merovingian king and placed Childeric III on the Merovingian throne. But the foundations of the Merovingian throne had been completely sapped and by 751 Pipin found that time had come when he could cease to be a king-maker and become a king both in name and fact. In that year he assumed the title of king with the full consent of the nation and the sanction of the pope, and the last of the Merovingians was deposed and sent to a monastery. It is supposed that this assumption was the result of the growing intimacy between the Pope and Pipin and the hand of the former is seen by many historians in the removal of Childeric from the throne.

*Pipin
assumed the
title of king*

In 751, the Lombard king Aistulf invaded and

Lombard king Aistulf's attack on Italy Pope Zacharias endorsed— deposition of Childeric III

actually took the city of Ravenna. Pipin the Short seized the opportunity and sent an embassy under Burkhard, bishop of Wurzburg, to Pope Zacharias “whether it was well or not to keep kings who had no royal power?” Zacharias, eager to win Pipin’s support against the Lombards by flattering his ambition sent the reply as was expected of him. A great assembly was summoned of the Franks who elected Pipin their sole king, and dethroned Childeric III, the last of the Merovingians.

Pope Stephen II anointed Pipin as king of the Franks and Patricius of the Romans

Three years later when Aistulf threatened to conquer the duchy of Rome, the new Pope Stephen II crossed the Alps into Gaul, anointed Pipin King of the Franks and *Patricius Romanorum*. The latter title, vague though it was, implied that the Frankish king was to hold lawful authority at Rome. Needless to say, the Pope had no legal right to give such political authority to Pipin, although tradition might mean that he was more or less a successor to such imperial representatives as Odoacer and Theodoric.

Pipin compelled Aistulf to make peace

Pipin repaid the gratitude by marching his multitudinous army down to Italy and administering a crushing defeat on Aistulf, who was compelled to sue for peace. He agreed to do personal homage to Pipin, send him hostages and to restore to the Holy See all that was due to it. On the signing of this agreement Stephen was triumphantly reconducted to Rome and Pipin returned home adding Lombardy to his number of vassals (755).

Aistulf again attacked Rome

Aistulf was, however, not the man quietly to accept defeat. In the year following he renewed his attack with a fury heightened by desire of vengeance. Descending the valley of the Tiber he suddenly laid siege of Rome. Stephen’s life and letters bear vivid description of the situation at Rome at that moment. Urgent calls were made to Pipin and his sons for aid. Boundless promises of eternal blessings

and infinite joys of paradise would not have in the least induced Pipin to lead another expedition to Rome if the interests of his dynasty were not so closely connected with the papacy. Pipin rightly realised that he could not desert the Pope in the imminent peril without weakening the foundations of his throne. His honour as a warrior also required that Aistulf should be punished for his breach of faith. Pipin determined to save the Pope, but he did so at the imminent risk of causing a revolt among his own vassals who openly and loudly expressed their disapproval of the war. "This war", says Einhard "was undertaken with the greatest difficulty, for some of chief men of the Franks with whom Pipin was accustomed to take counsel were so strongly opposed to his wishes that they openly declared that they would desert the king and return home." But Pipin's force of character and personality succeeded over the dissentients and he persisted in his determination to save the head of the Church.

*Pipin's
policy of
helping the
Pope and his
territories*

In his second Italian campaign Pipin, in spite of resistance made his way into Italy and took a fearful vengeance for the broken treaty, destroying and burning everything within his army's reach. The Frankish army then besieged Pavia. Aistulf, convinced of his utter inability to cope with Pipin, sued for peace. He renewed his oaths, sent fresh hostages, delivered a third of the royal treasure at Pavia and did Pipin homage. Aistulf had also agreed to pay an annual tribute. Thus for a second time the Pope was delivered from an imminent danger.

*Aistulf again
compelled to
seek peace*

Aistulf died, perhaps in 756, before he had enough time to forget the rough lessons that he had learnt at the hands of Pipin.

*Death of
Aistulf (756)*

The rising fortunes of the Roman Pope were all the more favoured by a disputed succession to the Lombard throne on the death of Aistulf. Desiderius,

*Disputed
succession to
the Lombard
throne*

constable of Aistulf obtained Pope's support in his bid for occupying the Lombard throne against the claim of Aistulf's brother Ratchis. Rome decided to support Desiderius even by force of arms if necessary. But matters ended in such a manner that Desiderius ascended the throne without a contest. The towns of Faventia with its fortresses as also the whole duchy of Ferrara were claimed by the papacy and according to some accounts were given to the Pope. But the next Pope complained that Desiderius did not keep his promise. Having in these ways served the papal interest Pope Stephen died in 757 A.D.

*Pipin's
career of
conquest since
760 A.D.*

Apart from his expedition against the Saxons, Pipin did not undertake any military expedition of any real importance before 760 A.D. In that year he began a long series of annual expeditions against Aquitaine which assumed a degree of independence highly offensive to the Franks.

*Extension of
Pipin's
dominion*

Charles Martel's adversary old Duke Hunold of Aquitaine had retired to a cloister and was succeeded by his false and restless son Waifer. On being asked to give up some Franks who had taken refuge in Aquitaine, Waifer took up arms against his suzerain Pipin (760) only to be defeated, to lose Berri and Auvergne and to sue for peace and to do homage to Pipin. But soon he proved false to his oaths and began to ravage Burgundy. Pipin came upon him with a terrible force and conquered Clermont and the rest of Auvergne, etc. The Duke of Bavaria—Tassilo seized this opportunity of Pipin's embroilment in Aquitaine and freed himself from the Frankish vassalage. But in spite of a little respite that Waifer got due to the revolt of Tassilo, his capital Toulouse fell in to the hands of the Franks in 767, and Waifer's own men despairing of success murdered him and put an end to the war. Aquitaine was thus restored to the Frankish realm.

In the mean time Tassilo was adequately chastised and certain sporadic raids against the Saxons gave Pipin mastery over Westphalia.

*Pipin master
of Westphalia*

During the last years of his reign Pipin occupied a central place in the affairs of Europe which was testified by the embassy sent to his court by the Abbasside Caliph of Bagdad to solicit his alliance against the rebel Ommeyad prince Abd-ar-Rahman of Spain. Pipin, however, wisely allowed the *infidels* to consume themselves. The Eastern Emperor Constantine Copronymus sent embassies to Pipin. One such embassy was to cajole Pipin to restore the ex-archate of Ravenna to the Eastern Empire, to which it really belonged. Pipin, however, refused to comply with such a request. Another embassy was to suggest a marriage between Pipin's daughter and Constantine's eldest son, and a third was meant to enlist the support of Pipin to the *Iconoclastic Movement* initiated by the Orthodox Church at Constantinople. But on no occasion Pipin was of any help to the Eastern Empire.

*Caliph of
Bagdad's
embassy to
Pipin*

Pipin's character "is somewhat difficult to fathom: he possessed all the distinguishing traits of the great men of the house of St. Arnulf, courage, ambition, energy, administrative skill, but showed few special characteristics of his own." Although, there was no ruling passion in his character he did not hesitate to assume royal title dethroning the last Merovingian king. As a civil ruler he was temperate and wise. His piety was universally recognised and brought forth most unqualified praise. He had that taste for literature which showed itself in a marked proportion in his son Charlemagne.

*Pipin's
character*

Of his private life we have little knowledge. But there are reasons to suppose that it was consistent with that respect for religion, that love of order, justice and moderation which were generally manifest in his public acts.

*His respect
for religion,
love of order,
justice, etc.*

CHAPTER 3

The Byzantine or the Eastern Empire

*Roman
Empire
collapsed:
Britain
abandoned to
the Anglo-
Saxons*

*Survival of
the eastern
part of the
empire*

*Constanti-
nople seat of
the Eastern
Empire*

*Emperor
Anastasius
(491-518)*

1/ Survival of the Empire in the East : THE STORY of the collapse of the Roman Empire under the successors of Theodosius has been traced in the previous chapters. By the opening of the sixth century Britain had long since been abandoned to the heathen Anglo-Saxon invaders.

Despite similarity in the administrative system, civil and military in both the western and the eastern parts of the empire, the Latin portion fell into ruins while the Latinized Greek portion persisted in land where it was foreign, for it was a Latin creation, not Greek. As Stephenson remarks "to some extent this strange result (survival of the eastern part) was due to mere accidents. The eastern emperors of the fifth century were remarkable neither for wisdom nor for energy. It was only their good fortune that, sooner or later, the principal barbarian hordes were attracted to the western provinces and that no serious offensive was launched by their enemies in Asia." But all the same the divergent fate suggests that there was something more fundamental than mere luck. The empire in the east displayed a really astonishing vitality, surviving the Theodosian dynasty for a thousand years. The very life of the eastern empire was Constantinople which maintained the imperial tradition, held a position of great strength and had a source of great wealth. Even before the end of the fifth century its economic position had considerably improved. Zeno's successor Anastasius (491-518) was able, in view of the improved economic condition, to repeal several oppressive measures that characterised the previous fiscal administration. He even succeeded in leaving

a treasury well stocked with gold. New fortunes were built by him and the defences of Constantinople were considerably improved. If this policy of improved defences and strict economy followed by Anastasius was continued in subsequent years by his successors the history of the eastern empire might have been different.

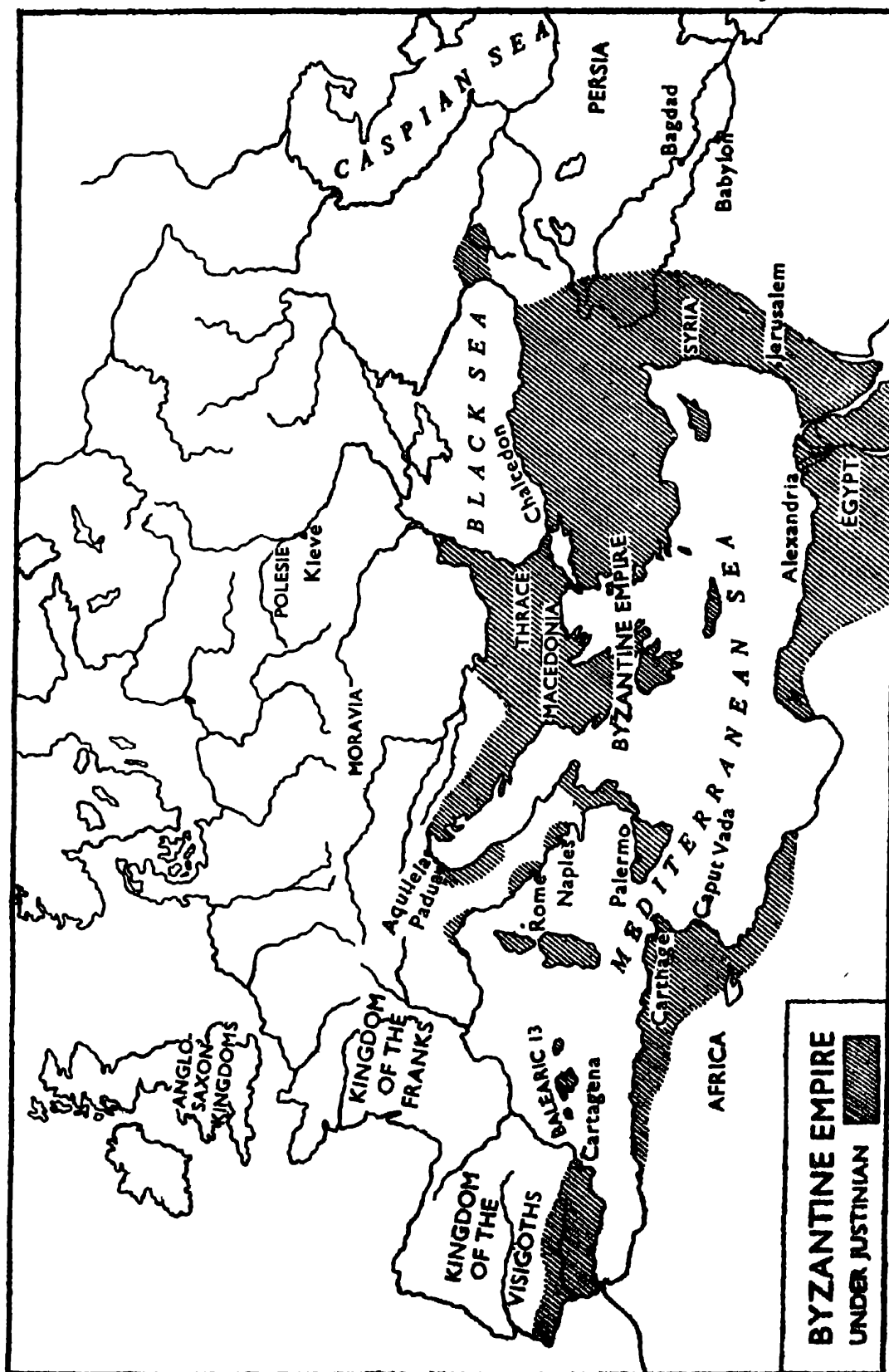
The death of Anastasius without an heir to succeed him threw the capital of the eastern empire into a mist of intrigue which, when cleared away found the commander of the palace guard Justin as the emperor. He was an Illyrian in origin and a soldier of fortune who enlisted himself in the imperial army and had risen from honour to honour till he became the commander of the palace guard. He had in his nephew and adopted son, Justinian an able lieutenant who was the *patricius* and *master of troops* under Justin. In his old age Justin appointed Justinian his co-emperor.

*Death of
Anastasius
without heir:
throne occu-
pied by
Justin,
commander of
the imperial
guard
Justin's
adopted son
Justinian*

2/ Justinian (527-65) : On Justin's death Justinian became the sole emperor of the eastern empire. His character, has ever since his life time been a matter of violent controversy. Much of the complexities has been created by the irreconcilable remarks made by historian Procopius who was responsible for writing three works on Justinian, namely, *History of the Wars*, *Secret History* and *Book of Edifices*. But even by the acknowledgement of his bitterest enemies Justinian was an extraordinary personality who left an indelible impress on the canvass of history and the west is even today indebted to him. All historians, contemporary or of posterity are agreed on the basic points of Justinian's character. He was not an uneducated, uncultured soldier-emperor like his uncle Justin. His education was of high standard, his training both in civil and military government under his uncle, fruitful and complete. He had an extraordinary power of assi-

*Justinian's
character*

*His interest
in statecraft,
architecture,
theology, law,
finance and
music*



milating knowledge of every kind. He took a keen interest alike in statecraft and architecture, in theology and law, in finance and music. Under Justin's rule Justinian developed into a practical administrator and acquired a grip of all the details of civil and military administration. Too indifferent to things pleasurable, Justinian had no passion except for work. "He rose early, spent his day in administrative duties, and his night in reading and writing." With growing age he seemed to have dispensed with sleep altogether, as though he had gone above the common necessities of human nature. His untiring, restless energy became the subject for strange, superstitious stories depicting him as having been under the influence of devil or a devil himself. But Justinian was a man and that he was so had been proved by a man's waywardness and recklessness, by his infatuation with a comedian girl of the public theatre and of ill-repute. She was Theodora, daughter of Acacius, a Cypriot. Justinian ultimately took Theodora as his imperial consort and shared the throne with her. His marriage with her was both a scandal and a wonder. By power of her brains and will Theodora justified her position as Empress, whatever her past history might have been. In 532 when there was a widespread revolt and Justinian's rule was about to come to an untimely end, it was the courage of Theodora that infused confidence among the members of the imperial council and the generals and with determination they fought to quell the revolt which had taken serious proportions and kept the imperial palace in a state of siege. Despite contemporary portrayal of Theodora's character in a spirit of superstitious and silly malignity, she was a fit enough occupant of the imperial throne.

*Strange
superstitious
stories about
him*

*His marriage
with
Theodora,
a comedian
girl*

*Widespread
revolt*

In a balanced view of the contemporary extravagant adulation as well of senseless malignity, it is possible to find out certain distinctive feature of

*Balanced
view of
Justinian's
character*

Justinian's character. As Orton puts it, "He was an emotional man, combining a passion for work and an equal passion for autocratic rule in the minutest detail; every one was to obey, everything to be done by, Church and the State were to think by, his decisions. He had much of the needful ability; he was a shrewd politician, a tireless administrator, and a learned theologian. He was an instinctive judge of other men's capacities: even when we take account of the vast reservoir of talent in the Empire, it can be no accident that he commissioned the best generals, the best lawyers, the best architects, the best historian, and deservedly the most hated tax-gatherer of the day."

*His magnificent
conception
about the
Roman
Empire*

Justinian was a Roman and had naturally a 'magnificent conception, an almost boundless ideal of the greatness of the Roman Empire'. His aims were the restoration of the boundaries of the empire, to make it again the home of Christian religion and culture, of art, knowledge, order and civil government. He began the double task of bringing the lost provinces to one fold and setting the fold itself to order.

*Limitations
of his policy*

Yet Justinian's policy suffered from certain serious limitations. He was no genius and he never measured his ambition by the resources at his command. Vain and conceited, despotic and whimsical, jealous of superior intellect, war-like without the qualities of a warrior, Justinian was not the person to save the empire that he set himself to build up, from the exhaustion and extravagance which eventually caused its undoing. "His fussy despotism combined with his turn for theology and his passion for uniformity to make him a bitter persecutor." Natural proneness to suspect even the most loyal servants of the state, total absolutism running along whimsical lines, made Justinian 'the absolute master of the Romans' both in words and deeds, a mastery in which lay the cause of its extinction.

*Despotic and
persecuting*

Justinian's military policy was to be defensive in the east and offensive in the west. In the east there were two wars with Persia but Justinian tried his best to minimise the conflict and ultimately bought peace in Asia 'at the cost of an alleged subsidy for the protection of Roman territory'. Justinian, however, did not turn his attention to the coming dangers from the Balkans and although the scourge of nomad raids across the Danube was almost continuous yet he allowed that frontier of the empire to remain in a perpetual state of weakness. His gaze was fixed on the west to conquer which he neglected what he already possessed elsewhere. Justinian's imperial plans were greatly aided by the disunion and incompetence of the western rulers. In Italy, Theodoric's successor was a minor and there was a female regency. In Gaul the sons of Clovis were busy in an internecine war. The Visigoths of Spain and the Vandals in Africa were no longer formidable. Africa offered a good opportunity for reconquest as well as a good base for further operations. An appeal against a usurping king gave Justinian the needed pretext to send his forces to Africa. War with the Persians having been over and insurrection of 532 put down effectively, Justinian sent about 16,000 men under the able general Belisarius supported by a navy. The Vandal king permitted Belisarius to disembark without opposition in the hope of getting help against the usurping king. But once the Romans were on the land, they carried everything before them and ended the kingdom of Gaiseric and thereby wiped out the Vandal kingdom of Africa, never to be heard of in History. Justinian proclaimed re-establishment of Roman provincial administration in Africa. But twelve more years were necessary to pacify Africa completely because of the widespread revolt of the Moors.

His military policy

His imperial policy aided by the disunion of the western rulers

Justinian re-established Roman provincial administration in Africa

In the meantime an excuse for invading Italy was provided by the murder of the Ostrogothic

*Gothic king
Totila
recaptured
Italy*

regent. A two-pronged attack was begun, one proceeding through Dalmatia and the other through Sicily. Belisarius occupied Sicily and thence occupied Italy without a fight (536). The Goths rallied their strength under a newly elected king Totila. Justinian mistook the temporary lull in Italy as the end of war and recalled Belisarius. The Goths under Totila soon recaptured Italy, built a fleet and reconquered Sicily, Sardinia and Corsica. Belisarius was again sent to Italy, but with inadequate force, for a second war had begun with Persia and additional troops were needed in Africa. Belisarius, naturally could not do much and was recalled and command given to another talented general Narses who after desperate fighting defeated and killed Totila (552) and in the next year his victory was complete and the Gothic opposition smashed.

*Civil war
offered
opportunity to
Justinian to
re-establish
a Roman
province in
Spain*

A civil war in Spain offered Justinian his third needed opportunity but eventually the two contending parties of the Visigoths under two rival kings united against the imperial forces and Justinian's army succeeded only in occupying a portion of the southern coast which with the Balearic islands were formed into a Roman province of Spain, and Justinian could now boast that the Mediterranean was once again a Roman lake.

*Limitations
of Justinian's
imperial
revival*

Brilliant though it was, Justinian's imperial revival, should not be exaggerated, for it suffered from many a defect. Apart from the limitations of his foreign policy, his career of conquest did not bear the marks of statesmanship and did not subserve the very policy to which it tried to give a practical shape. As Orton rightly points out, 'the cardinal error of Justinian was to attempt a wide western reconquest and to reign and build with unexampled splendour, when the resources of the Eastern Empire required careful husbanding if they were to suffice for its mere defence.' Further,* the territories regained in Africa did not extend to the straits, the

Visigoths still held most of Spain and Septimania. In Italy the old provinces of Pannonia, Norcium and Rhaetia were not within his conquests. Even within the limited area, the reconstituted empire of Justinian had no real vitality. Despite our admiration for the energy and determination shown by Justinian in his devotion to an ancient ideal, the fact remains that he squandered the resources of his original (eastern) empire on a lost cause. 'His project of political reunification was hopeless of real accomplishment. The cost of his adventure was the exhaustion of his original empire'. The significance of Justinian's Italian conquest was the opening of the way for the invasion of the Lombards. By dividing Italy into Lombard Italy with its outlying duchies of Spoleto and Benevento, Byzantine Italy with its capital at Ravenna and Papal Italy with its capital at Rome, nominally subject to the exarchate of Ravenna, left Italy disunited and merely a geographical name till 1870, for it led to extreme territorial disorganisation.

*Exhaustion
of his
original
empire*

Justinian's religious policy was no more successful than his policy of restoration of the Roman empire. His aim was to include all his subjects within one Church dominated by himself. Control of the Church was considered by Justinian as a part of his imperial office. He was determined to see the Church completely subject to his will, with its clergy subject to his appointment, its ecclesiastical affairs subject to his judication, and its dogma subject to his dictation. This was representing the idea called *Caesaropapism*, that is, the emperor was not only the Caesar, the absolute head of the state but the pope as well, the absolute head of the church. Here we notice, a reverse policy was in action in the East Roman Empire of what in the Western Empire the church claimed. There the pope claimed to be not only the divine head, but as representative of God on earth also the head of the secular state. Justinian wanted

*His religious
policy*

Caesaropapism

*Different
Christian
sects*

to maintain control over the church and thus to use it as a powerful support for the throne. But the matter was not so easy of accomplishment. For long before Justinian two independent sects: the Nestorians and Monophysites had arisen in Syria, Palestine and Egypt who would not tolerate the domination of the Greek Hellenistic Church from Byzantium. Apart from the doctrinal differences, it was of great political significance since it was more or less a national church that Syria, Palestine and Egypt were trying to maintain. An attempt at compromise by Zeno to resolve the differences between the Orthodox Church and the Nestorians and Monophysites by an imperial decree did not satisfy either party. Justinian's attempt to pursue a policy of unity based on co-operation of the Roman Pope did not succeed, particularly because his queen Theodora was a Monophysite. The result was that Syria, Palestine and Egypt were left independent to follow their own belief. In the rest of the empire Justinian wanted to follow a general policy of Christianisation and to that end he ordered the closure of all pagan schools at Athens and confiscated their endowments. The professors took refuge in Persian court and were later permitted to come to Constantinople. Justinian proclaimed a theological ultimatum and sought to impose it on all parties in Rome. One Pope was deposed and his successor was taken to Constantinople and there compelled in some measure to accept the imperial dictum. A general council summoned to meet in Justinian's presence also submitted to him. Justinian felt that he had won complete victory in respect of his religious policy, but this only aggravated the old dispute. In the west the sole effect of Justinian's policy of religious despotism was to assure permanent antagonism of the papacy and thereby to weaken imperial hold on Italy. 'The logical reply to the reign of Justinian was the pontificate of Gregory the Great.'

*General
policy of
Christianisation*

*Limitations
of his religious
policy*

Justinian has gone down in history not so much as a conqueror as for his part in the preservation of Rome's greatest contribution to the western civilisation, her system of law and jurisprudence. The rule of law was one of the most fundamental conceptions of the Roman empire and Rome's most outstanding contribution to the development of civilisation is the rule of law. Justinian's codification of the Roman laws is agreed on all hands as his main achievement which establishes his claim to a notable place in history. The old Roman law had become static and had lost its dynamism for want of magisterial interpretations based on equity, amalgamation of customs and more particularly, for want of *Praetorian Edicts* which expanded, rationalised and fixed the main line of civil and private laws as also for the extinction of the great succession of great juristic thinkers like Papinian, Gaius, Paul, Ulpian, Modestinus, etc. The conflicting edicts of the Emperors, new laws, amendments, mutually conflicting interpretations given by later jurists called for a re-codification and rationalisation of the Roman law. This was done to a very limited extent by Theodosius in the *Theodosian Code*. The confusion and obscurity arising from multifarious sources and interpretations needed reduction to order, fixity, harmony and accessibility. It was under the inspiration of Tribonian, Justinian's corrupt but brilliant *Quaester* that codification of Roman Law began. The labours of a legal commission produced the first edition of *Codex Justinianus* or *Corpus Juris Civilis*, a classified and revised compilation of all still valid imperial constitutions up-to-date. This was a perfection of the imperfect *Theodosian Code*. The second edition published in 534, which is still extant, contained the treatises of 40-jurists. This 'gave the Roman world a practical statement of the law in use, cleared of the obsolete, full in detail, yet terse and lucid, and of exclusive authority. It made manageable and thus secured the preservation of the wonderful legal

*Justinian's
laws*

*Justinian's
notable place
in history*

*Codex
Justinianus
or Corpus
Juris
Civilis*

*Justinian's
Institutes
and Digest*

*Justinian's
laws*

*Justinian's
rule no matter
of joy to
many of his
subjects*

achievement of generations of Roman jurists.' Justinian's *Institutes* published together with the *Digest* (533) was a manual for the students and an authoritative course of study for the law schools of Constantinople, Rome and Syria. The fit reward for the codification of law by Justinian was the immortality of his work. Justinian added to the body of the Roman law by passing many laws necessary for his administration. Most of Justinian's laws deal with one or other of three main themes: civil and military administration of the empire, ecclesiastical and theological matters, and family and private property. It is interesting to note that in matters of secular administrations Justinian's law prohibited candidates for magistracies from canvassing or offering payments for securing appointments. His law also provided for summary dismissal of officers and their banishment who put difficulties in the way of the subjects in their private matters, with a view to making improper gains. In order that justice was expedited the judges were warned against constantly referring difficulties to the emperor but to decide cases speedily leaving it with the dissatisfied party to appeal to the emperor. Any litigant who would confess his guilt of having bribed the judge would be granted pardon. Executor of judicial decrees would be fined fourfold the amount which he would exact in excess of what the judicial decision would warrant. This was to stop extortion of citizens. Likewise there are many innovations made by Justinian which appeal to modern minds. His zeal for good government was the inspiration for much law-making concerned with administrative reforms. There was much to amend, much to reduce to order. There was universal corruption in the administration, systems of police, finance, taxation and justice. The peasants were the greatest sufferers, the great proprietors evaded taxation, bought up or seized lands from the poor, their retainers carried on a reign of terror in the neighbourhood. Only

one-third of the tax collected, reached the imperial treasury. The uncertainty of law, the greatest creation of the Roman Empire, became the source of the evil of unjust decisions in courts of law. The mounting cost of Justinian's grandiose wars meant the continuance of the evil of extortionate taxation. The splendour of Justinian's reign was not at all matter of rejoicing to the millions of his subjects. But Justinian's laws made some marked improvement in the situation despite the continuance of some of the evils. The sale of offices was abolished, vigilant care was taken of the revenues. Bishops were required to inspect the conduct of the officials, complaints against official misdeeds were encouraged. Provincial administration was simplified and the separation of the civil and military administration as devised by Diocletian was essentially revived. In the troubled frontier districts civil duties were placed in charge of the military commanders, a system to be copied later on more widely. Provinces were better organised and their size made more or less similar. Redundant posts of officials were reduced and officers' pay enhanced. The Police system was remodelled and reformed. Under Theodora's influence fallen women were given public asylum and protected against sale as slaves. Undesirable foreigners were expelled from Constantinople, games of unruly nature were abolished. Roads, buildings, aqueducts, public baths, reservoirs, churches and monasteries were constructed to satisfy Justinian's desire for public utility as well as for splendour and art. New cities like *Justiniana Prime*, rebuilding of the city of *Antioch* after its destruction by the Persians bore testimony to Justinian's love for building. Palaces, Churches, Porticos, Hospitals which still exist were constructed with lavish splendour, the most magnificent of all was of course the peerless St. Sophia Church, a masterpiece of Byzantine art. To the public usefulness of these works may be added the employment and

*Revival of
Diocletian
administra-
tion*

*Public
utility works:
Justiniana
Prime,
Palaces,
Churches,
St. Sophia
Church*

education they gave to an industrious and art-loving population.

Trade and commerce

Trade and commerce also thrived under the fostering care of Justinian. Attempts were made under him to circumvent the Persian monopoly through which silk, spice and Indian products came, but these did not succeed. The Crimean ports flourished during his reign. Silk industry received a great help due to the introduction of eggs of silkworm smuggled in by two missionaries. By 554 the empire succeeded in producing its own silk.

Weakness of various types at the end of his reign

Thus Justinian's many activities promised well for the future, but the promise ended in smoke on the close of his career. Even towards the close of his reign sale of offices flourished, corruption reappeared and the emperor renewed his edicts in vain. The imperial treasury was exhausted, the fortifications were in a state of disrepair, size of the army was diminished and the frontiers lay open to barbarian attacks. Strict economy initiated by cutting off sinecures could hardly make up the leeway between revenue and prodigal expenditure. In 565 when Justinian died, he left "a state bled white, the frontiers pillaged, the government weak before the great proprietors, the proletariats riotous and seditious, the Monophysites alienated. Yet he bequeathed great achievements to posterity, Byzantine art and the epoch-making Code which clarified and preserved the Roman Law."

His contribution to the posterity

Justin II (565-78) —continued Justinian's glorious example

3/ Justinian's Successors : Justinian was succeeded by his cousin Justin II (565-78) on whom devolved the task of guiding an exhausted, ill-defined Empire through both internal and external crises. He remained loyal to Justinian's glorious examples, yet had to abandon all thought of offensive war; even defending his inherited dominions proved an impossible task.

Justin knew well the state of his finances and the strength of his army, and wanted to bluff foreign powers by a lofty inflexibility. Internally his attempted compromise on religion failed and he began following a policy of ruthless persecution which made matters worse. Externally the policy of subsidising the Turks who had built up a vast empire in Central Asia and in whom Justinian found a useful ally, was given up by Justin but was ultimately forced to agree to the blackmail. The Lombards and the Avars jointly attacked modern Hungary and Transylvania where the Gepids had been long settled as quiet allies of Rome. The Gepids were overthrown and hence they disappeared from history. Justin also renewed war with Persia taking advantage of the imminent war between the Turks and the Persians. But it ended in disaster the shock of which left Justin bereft of reason.

His policy of persecution

His foreign policy

Justin II's successor Tiberius II (578–82) was the really Greek emperor of the Eastern Empire which was Roman in tradition. He realised the need of tolerating the Monophysites and all religious persecutions were stopped. He fought with the Persians to bring them to an honourable settlement with the empire but his efforts failed. He had also to fight with the Avars and the Turks with no better success.

Tiberius II (578–82)—a real Greek emperor

His hostilities with the Turks, Avars and the Persians

Tiberius chose Maurice (582–602), a Cappadocian as his successor who besides his military experience possessed courage, public spirit, and insight into men and things. His self-confidence was strong, almost to a fault. His ill-advised reduction of the soldiers' pay had nullified the successes obtained earlier in the conflict with the Persians. The unpopularity of his adversary Ormizd IV, however, made the position of Maurice comparatively strong. Ormizd was murdered in a palace revolution and his son and successor Chosroes II had to flee for his life and appeal to Maurice for help which the latter rendered, and restored Chosroes to the throne for

Maurice (582–602)—his ill-advised policy

*His foreign
policy*

which a good recompense was obtained in the extension of the Byzantine frontiers to Lake Van and the Araxes, and included vassal Iberia. This gave the Emperor a good recruiting ground in Christian Armenia. He reorganised the provinces of Africa and placed in each a military viceroy under the title Ex-arch. In the Balkans Maurice now sought to secure the Danube against Baian and his Avars and Slavs. After prolonged warfare imperial army succeeded in winning victory but Maurice in his unwisdom left the imperial troops to remain beyond the Danube during the winter that had set in. This led to a mutiny and under Phocas their leader marched against the imperial capital. Maurice could not even obtain the support of the city militia and had to flee for his life and Phocas was crowned emperor by the army. Maurice and his son were ultimately captured and massacred.

*Phocas: a
reign of
terror began*

*Chosroes II's
determination
to revive
Maurice's
policy*

Under Phocas who possessed neither virtue nor ability, a reign of terror began. Balkans and Asia Minor refused to recognise him as the rightful Emperor; only the army which made him emperor and Pope Gregory who was at odds with Maurice gave Phocas support. But the scourge of Phocas was to come from the east. Chosroes II determined to avenge the cruel assassination of his benefactor Maurice and his family and what was more, he wanted to reconstitute the Persian Empire of Darius. He seized Roman Armenia, captured Dara, Syria and Mesopotamia and even raided North Asia Minor up to Hellespont. Phocas in his unwisdom paralysed the defence by entering into a religious conflict against the Monophysites. To add to Phocas' misfortune Heraclius an aged and trusted General of Maurice who had also secret support from the high military officials at Constantinople became a rebel and cut off Alexandra and Egypt from the empire and thus snapped the sources of food supply to Constantinople. Next came a direct naval attack

on Constantinople by Heraclius whom the Greens, one of the two factions, Greens and Blues, into which the people were divided, rendered all support. Phocas was murdered and aged Heraclius' son of the same name, the younger Heraclius was crowned emperor.

4/ Heraclius (610-41): Heraclius succeeded to a plentiful crop of troubles both internal and external. Internally, the unresolved conflict between Orthodox Christians and Monophysites needed his attention. His marriage with his niece Martina incurred the disapproval of the Church. The army was exhausted and demoralised, treasury empty, and Heraclius' comrade in rebellion general Priscus failing to obtain the crown was disaffected. Externally, the Slavs were ravaging the Balkans, the Persian Emperor Chosroes II was still trying to reconstitute the lost empire of Darius and bent on war with Heraclius.

*His
difficulties*

No sooner Heraclius succeeded in dealing with his rival Priscus by sending him to the cloister by a stratagem smacking of treachery, than the Persians led a raid against the empire (613). Heraclius' attempt to repel Persian invasion failed and Chosroes captured Syria and Jerusalem; the Persian army under general Shalim reached Bosphorus. Patriarch Sergius of Constantinople roused an unprecedented religious fervour among the Byzantines by impressing upon them the need for supporting the crusade against the infidels. At this juncture came an Avar invasion. Pretending to talk of peace the Khagan of the Avars attacked Heraclius but he somehow saved himself. The Avars hoped to occupy Constantinople and had actually started migrating into depopulated areas of the Balkans. To make matters worse Persian general Shahrbaraz captured Egypt and again cut off supplies to Constantinople. Heraclius bought off the Avar Khagan temporarily and beat off a new attack by the Persian navy. But

*Hostilities
with Avars*

Heraclius was in dire need of money and it was at the instance of Patriarch Sergius that the Church loaned out its huge treasure to Heraclius. Now it was Heraclius' chance to proceed against the Persians in Asia Minor where they were carrying on operations of conquest. He defeated Persian general Shahrbaraz, occupied Divin, capital of Persian Armenia, thence proceeded against Chosroes who had to flee from Tabriz in Azarbaijan.

*Avar Khagan
and Persian
Emperor made
common cause
against
Heraclius*

Soon after, the Avar Khagan and the Persian Emperor Chosroes made a common cause against Heraclius and were to attack Constantinople. Heraclius defeated the Khagan and prevented a conjunction of the Avar and the Persian armies.

*Success of
Heraclius:*

*Frontiers of
the time of
Maurice
dividing line
between
Persian and
Byzantine
empires*

In the Balkans, it was no more within Heraclius' power than to be content with a nominal suzerainty. But Heraclius did not feel like resting before striking Chosroes in his own territory. Long profitless war with the Persians caused a revengeful determination in Heraclius and after allying himself with the Khazars, a Turkish' tribe, Heraclius crossed the Avaxes for Armenia. The Khagan of the Khazars was an enemy of the Persians and a trusted ally of Byzantium. He was also supporting Heraclius' expedition. Persian general Rahzadh was defeated and killed in an engagement at Nineveh (627). Heraclius now pursued Chosroes who was withdrawing before Heraclius' march, but would not agree to any terms of peace. In 628, that is soon after, came the news of Chosroes' murder as a result of a palace revolution. His successor Siroes sued for peace. The frontiers of the time of Maurice was accepted as the dividing line between the Persian and the Byzantine Empires.

*Stupendous
task of
internal
reconstruction*

Long arduous tasks of defending the empire against formidable foes left Heraclius broken in health. Yet his task of internal reconstruction was stupendous. Reconstitution of an almost shattered

empire was rendered somewhat easy by the broken strength of the senatorial land-owners due to the barbarian and Persian invasions. Watertight division of the civil and the military government of the time of Diocletian needed change. The conflict, with the infidels generated a hysterical religious fervour, highly superstitious and credulous.

Heraclius reorganised the military government of *Themes* (*i.e.*, a division of the army) and each was put under a general. Themes were cantoned in important provinces of the empire. The troops were endowed as military free-tenants on condition that the holdings were to furnish military recruits in perpetuity. Thus the system of free-peasant soldiers was re-established and they were to man the imperial army with their offsprings. This was applied to the navy as well. The *Themes* were also the divisions of the civil government and the sharp distinction of civil and military governments was wiped out. "This military and social reform, when it was completed, was the salvation of the empire. It gave a native army and an efficient administration."

*His internal
achievements*

The greater influence of Greek in place of Roman form and style, for instance, the use of the term *Basileus*, etc., could be noticed during the reign of Heraclius. The official language was Greek in place of Latin.

*Influence of
Greek form*

Heraclius' attempted compromise in matters of religion with the help of a formula found out by Sergius, that would be acceptable to both the Orthodox and the Monophysites had to be abandoned due to the opposition of the Patriarch of Jerusalem. Further attempts also failed and persecution of the Monophysites began in the provinces. Taxation had to be enhanced in order to repay the loan taken by Heraclius from the church. The Arabs had started invading the empire and Syria was captured by them. Egypt was about to be conquered. The last

*His church
policy*

years of Heraclius were thus bringing for him failures and it was in this frustrated moments of his life that he died in February, 641.

*Most
unfortunate
of East
Roman
Emperors*

'Heraclius' observes Orton "was one of the greatest and the most unfortunate of the East Roman Emperors. He had saved the empire from ruin, he had begun a revivifying reorganisation, only to be immediately attacked by the new migration of the Arabs and their religion Islam, which revolutionised the Mediterranean lands. Italy was already half Lombard; the Balkans were more than half Slav; the remnant of Roman Spain was lost (629) in his days. He had really to oppress his subjects in order to refund his loan to the Church in accordance with the febrile, blind devotion of the time. Under the strain of his anxieties he himself had contracted a nervous disease which gave him a morbid fear of the sea. But his achievements had been immense, the work of rare talents for war and peace. He was the overtasked hero of a new and darker age."

*Constantine
III*

*Ephemeral
emperors*

5/ Successors of Heraclius : The East Roman Empire was left in an extremely disadvantageous situation at the moment of Heraclius' death (641). It was not in a position to resist the vigorous Moslem attack against its remaining provinces. Heraclius' successors Constantine III (641), Heracleonius (641), Constans II (641-48), Constantine IV (668-85) and Justinian II (685-95, restoration 705-11) were emperors who were incapable of dealing with, and far less than a match for the Moslem invaders, and their periods of rule may be dismissed without going into detail. On Justinian II's death there followed full six years of complete anarchy (711-17) during which the imperial annals were filled with obscure names of Philippicus (711-13), Anastasius (713-15), and Theodosius III (715-17).

The easy success of the Moslem armies over the ephemeral emperors that succeeded Justinian II

made Caliph Suleiman to attempt a largescale attack against the Byzantine imperial capital Constantinople. Leo the Isaurian, governor of Anatolic *Theme* seeing the Caliph's troops laying siege of Amorium, the chief stronghold of Phrygia signed a truce on his own responsibility with the invading forces and proclaimed himself emperor. But instead of preparing for resisting Suleiman's troops in a future engagement, Leo proceeded towards Constantinople. Theodosius was beaten and deposed; and Leo got himself elected emperor by the Senate and the Patriarch.

*Caliph
Suleiman's
attempt at a
largescale
attack of
Constanti-
nople*

Leo (717-40), was, however, the first emperor in twenty-two years who could defend the remnants of the empire and was fully able to transmit his powers to his heirs.

*Leo (717-40)
first capable
emperor in
two decades*

A migrant from the Isaurian region of Taurus to Thrace, Leo was the son of parents of some wealth. Under Anastasius II Leo became the governor of Anatolic *Theme*. Active and enterprising, talented and persevering with great ability as a soldier and capacity for organisation Leo the Isaurian was to a large extent original in his views on politics and religion. Within five months of his accession to the throne the much dreaded Saracens appeared under their leader Moslemah. The Saracen army was 80,000 strong and was supported by a fleet of 1,000 sails. But Leo was careful enough to spend his initial five months in accumulating vast stores of provisions, strengthening the army by large number of recruits and repairing and strengthening fortifications. The blockade of Constantinople by Moslemah both by land and sea was imperfect and suffered reverse at the hands of Leo. But soon reinforcements both by land and sea arrived. The reinforcement by land came from Tarsus and naval support from Egypt and Africa. The Egyptian ships were manned by Christians who were forced into the ships against their will, dispersed and fled ashore and the handful of Moslems fought only to be defeated. The

His career

*His great
success over
the Moslems*

landforces of Moslemah were cut off from Asia from behind by Leo's forces which reduced the Moslem troops to near starvation condition. Further, Leo impressed upon Bulgarian king Terbel the fact that Saracen invasion of Europe was as much dangerous to him as to the Empire. Terbel proceeded with an army against Moslemah who sent a detachment to resist Terbel's advance. But this detachment was totally annihilated and 22 thousand men fell in the encounter. This shattered all hopes of Moslemah to improve his situation. He retreated with less than a third of his original army. The rest fell in the process of the siege and engagements. This was the greatest expedition that the Caliphs sent forth and was better equipped than that was defeated by Charles Martel. "Leo's success must be ascribed to his own courage and energy, and skill next to the impregnable strength of the walls of Constantinople, and lastly, to inexperience of the Arabs on the sea." The posterity must feel grateful to Leo for stemming the tide of Saracen conquest of Europe at a time when there was no other power that could check the advance of the invading Moslems. "It is, therefore, fair to ascribe to Leo the Isaurian an even greater share in the salvation of Europe from the Moslem peril than is given to Charles Martel." The Saracen raids which continued even after that, till the end of his reign, yet these were of no serious nature, and Leo found time to reorganise his shattered empire.

*A second
Charles
Martel—
Saviour of
Europe*

*Excellent
character of
his adminis-
tration*

Leo's reforming hands touched every branch of administration and although all records of his reforms have perished, yet *Ecloga* or new handbook of law which has survived and many other references go to show the excellent character of his administration. Under him can be noticed a great decrease in the number of the serfs and the very healthy outcome of this socio-economic change became evident in the large number of free tenants who worked on the estates on payment of fixed rental.

One prominent feature of the time was the growth of superstition, witchcraft and a strange misconception of the natural phenomena. In direct contravention of the Christian practice and belief uncanny and mysterious powers were ascribed to the representations and emblems preserved in the church. This led to Leo's most controversial reform in the field of religion known in history as Iconoclastic controversy.

Growth of superstition

6/ Iconoclastic Controversy : Of the prominent yet irrational growth of superstitions in the seventh century was the tendency towards image worship or *Iconoduly* as it was called by all its opponents. It became the practice of the time to ascribe the most strange, uncanny and magical powers to emblems or representations whether painted or sculptured, of Jesus Christ or the Saints. These visible representations were originally regarded as useful memorials to guide the piety of believers. But growth of superstitions invested these with an inherent holiness and were regarded as capable of performing the most astonishing miracles. Even Heraclius carried on his person a picture which he superstitiously believed to have been painted in heaven by angels and a harbinger of good luck to him. A crucifix at the door of the imperial palace was believed to have the power of human speech. No church was without some wonder-working image which drew much revenue from the pious visitors. At Constantinople, the bishops affirmed that the hand of a celebrated picture of the Virgin was distilling fragrant balsam. Such was the growth of the superstitious beliefs that at baptismal some paint used to be scrapped off from any image and mixed up with the baptismal water, and the picture or the image would be regarded as the God-father of the baptised child.

Iconoduly

Superstitions

The growth of superstition to such grotesque

*Christians
ridiculed by
the Moslems*

proportions as well as the jokes that the monotheist Moslems croaked at the Christians for verging on the border of idolatry by maintaining paintings and sculptured images led to a reaction at the seat of Orthodox Christianity, *i.e.* Constantinople.

*Paintings and
engravings
opposed to
Christ's
divinity*

The taunts of the Moslems found too much justification in many practices of the then Church. To all thoughtful men, particularly to Leo the Isaurian, the graven or painted representations of Jesus Christ were putting too much stress on his humanity as opposed to his divinity.

*Leo's
Iconoclasm*

Leo was very much orthodox about religion and his greatest enemy would not venture to question his sincerity in this regard. But he differed from his other orthodox co-religionists in the matter of image-worship. He removed from the standard of his army, gates of his palace, from the imperial robe and from his coins the crucifix and put instead a simple cross. It was the human representation of Jesus Christ that he objected to. It is supposed that Leo was not only a man of strong commonsense and much religiosity but none the less of some rational and philosophical education. His objection to image-worship was not due to unthinking prejudice borrowed from the Saracens but to his rational and philosophical thinking. His views found ample support from the educated lay men, his soldiery and from the higher officers of his civil service and the army. But his chief opponents were the monks and churchmen whose interest lay in the revenue-earning practice of investing mysterious powers in the images and other visible representations of Jesus and the Saints. The blind bigotry of the uneducated lower classes made them opponents to his views. Again, the eastern provinces of the empire supported his views but not the western which were *Iconodulic*. Italy and the Papacy were, by and large, the strongest opponents of Leo in this regard. However, Leo issued his *Iconoclastic Edict* forbidding all image-

*Iconoclastic
Edict*

worship as 'irrelevant and superstitious and ordered the removal of all holy statues and the white-washing of all holy pictures on the Church walls' (726). The decree was intensely unpopular with the mass of the people. Riots broke out both in Greece and Italy. The aged Patriarch at Constantinople was removed from office for opposing imperial will. But in Italy no such action was possible against the Pope who placed himself at the head of the movement against Iconoclasm, and even addressed most insulting letters to the emperor. All over the empire, the bulk of the clergy declared against the emperor and at many places they began preaching sedition. The Roman Pope opposed the movement as it was against tradition and more because a movement of such a great import was not to be initiated from Constantinople, if at all, it should have come from the Italian Pope who was the direct successor to Peter. The upstart house of Constantinople, to the Papal mind, had no claim to initiate any church reform of such a serious nature. The Pope, therefore, pronounced excommunication against all who accepted the Iconoclastic programme. An anti-Caesar was put up and he was Cosmas. An expedition was led against Constantinople to seize the imperial throne for Cosmas but it was beaten back and Cosmas was captured and beheaded.

*Opposition
of the Roman
Pope*

*Pope's
measures
against
Iconoclastic
movement*

It is to the credit of Emperor Leo that he did seldom punish disobedience to his *Iconoclastic Edict* with death. He wanted his edict to be obeyed but did not persecute for ensuring obedience. The rioters and rebels suffered at his hands indeed, but not as image-worshippers, 'just as in the reign of Elizabeth of England the Jesuit suffered, not as a Papist, but as a traitor.' Leo's policy was promotion of Iconoclasm not by maltreating the *Iconodulics*.

*Leo's
generosity:
No persecu-
tion*

The last thirteen years of the reign of Leo were years of success, speaking generally. Except the Pope and Italy, the major part of the empire had accepted

*Sharp
division of
the Eastern
and Western
empires
because of the
Iconoclastic
Controversy*

the Iconoclastic programme. Saracen invasions, encouraged by the internal dissensions over religion, repeatedly for four times in 727, 730, 732 and 737–38, were beaten off without any serious loss and the imperial boundary remained fixed in the passes of the Taurus. For three full centuries to follow the Saracen menace was kept at bay due to the success Leo gained over them. The *Iconoclastic Controversy* begun as a result of Leo's edict divided the eastern and western parts of the empire which continued intermittently until the images were formally restored by imperial edict of 843.

*Constantine
Copronymus
(740–75)*

Leo was succeeded by his son Constantine Copronymus (740–75) who had long acted as his father's colleague and was thoroughly trained in Leo's administration and indoctrinated with Leo's Iconoclastic views. Soon after his accession there was an *Iconodulic* rebellion led by Artavasdus, a general of one of the Themes. But the rebellion was suppressed and Artavasdus who proclaimed himself emperor and his sons were blinded and sent to a monastery. The chief adherents of the Iconodulic anti-Caesar Artavasdus were beheaded. This had a salutary effect on the other *Iconodulics* for they now recognised that the son of Leo the Isaurian was better fitted to punish than to persuade.

*His zeal for
the suppression
of the
Iconodulics*

To obtain religious sanction to his method of putting down the Iconodulics by persecution, Constantine summoned a general council at Constantinople which was not attended by the Patriarch of Antioch, Jerusalem and Alexandria, but three hundred thirty-eight bishops assembled and the council committed itself fully to *Iconoclastic* doctrine for it saw in the visible emblems of the Lord a human representation as opposed to the divinity of the Lord. The *Iconodulics* flung terms of contempt at Constantine, fit to be used to describe a Judas or Herod.

The spiritual sanction obtained from the general council strengthened the hands of Constantine and the image-worshippers were now persecuted as heretics. The monks were the most obstinate supporters of image-worship and they held a great influence upon the mob. Constantine decided to put an end to the monastic system itself which was the strongest bulwark of superstition. But to uproot a system which had the sanction of centuries and highly revered by the multitude was an impossibility. Constantine tried to secularise the monastics. Many of them were given the alternatives of either marrying or banishment. The majority chose the latter. Constantine's persecution forced many monks and nuns to get married and many of the deserted monasteries were pulled down or converted into barracks. But the Iconodulics were impossible to be crushed to a man, although they were cowed due to cruel persecution.

*His attempt
to uproot the
Monastic
system*

*His
persecution*

Constantine's successor Leo IV (775–80) was a follower of his father's policy although with less harsh hands. He flogged and banished many Iconodulics but did not object to monks as Constantine had done and allowed them to rebuild their monasteries. In 777 he became terribly persecuting, probably due to the discovery of a conspiracy against him in which his own brothers had leagued with the anti-party, mostly image-worshippers. But while he banished many of the conspirators and pardoned his brothers, he did not stain his hands with blood.

*Leo IV
(775–80)*

Leo IV left his throne to his minor son Constantine VI for whom his widow Irene was to act as regent. Under Irene the *Iconoclastic* cause suffered a setback for she herself was an image-worshipper, although she cleverly kept it concealed from her husband during his lifetime. The immediate effect was end of all persecutions of the Iconodulics. On the death of Patriarch Paul, a supporter of *Iconoclasm*,

*Constantine
VI—a minor
under Queen
mother's care*

*Queen
mother Irene,
herself an
Iconodulic*

Irene appointed one of her creatures Tarasius, an image-worshipper, as Patriarch, called a general council which restored image-worship in 787. The recalcitrant Iconoclastic bishops were excommunicated, the greater part of the army which was still loyal to the views of the Isaurian emperors rose in revolt but were suppressed.

*Irene
usurps her
son's throne*

In the mean time Constantine VI came of age but was kept out of power by his mother who had, by this time, developed much taste for power and who feared a reversal of her religious policy under her son. With the help of the Anatolic troops Constantine proclaimed himself of age and emperor of the realm. He also banished his mother's favourites and kept her confined in the palace for some time. But a son's natural fondness for his mother brought Irene back to power almost as a co-regent. But Irene repaid this by conspiring against her own son. Eventually, ingratitude, too much love of power wiped out the mother's sentiments in Irene and she succeeded in dethroning her son Constantine VI in 797. The next five years were the years of Irene's personal rule and her Iconodulic policy remained unaltered. It was during her reign (800) that the western empire was united under Charlemagne and he was crowned emperor. In 802 when her cup of misery was full, as if by way of retribution, she was deposed by the state treasurer Nicephorus who proclaimed himself as her successor.

CHAPTER 4

Charles the Great (Charlemagne)

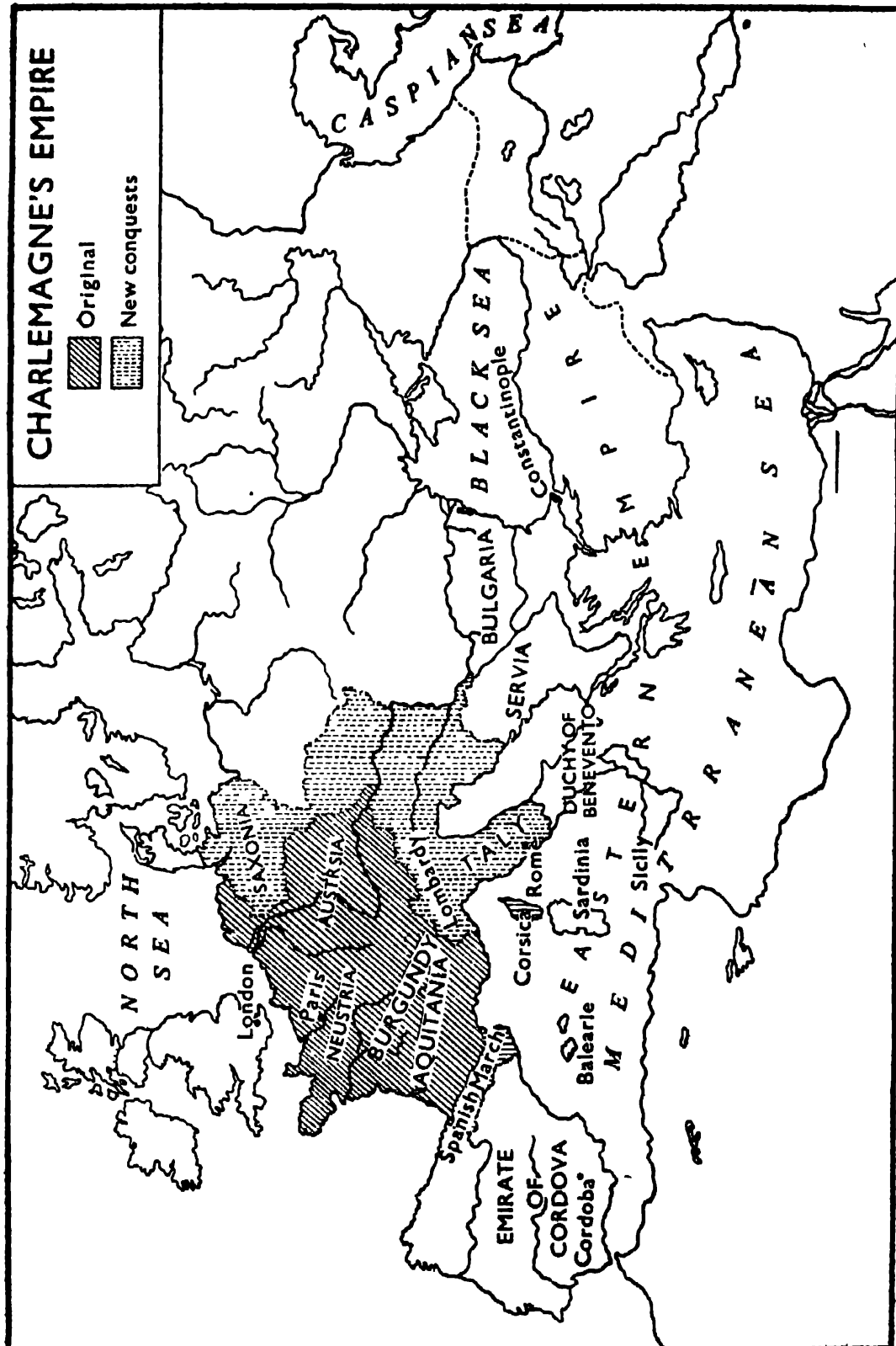
1/ Alliance between the Papacy and the Frankish House : THE ALLIANCE between the Papacy and the Franks was in the nature of adversity bringing in strange bed-fellows. The Italian Popes were willing to free themselves from the galling tutelage of Byzantium. In 476, when the line of the Roman emperors in the west became extinct, the papal strength and prestige increased. To all reasonableness, the Pope was the heir to the civil government in Italy and the popes had achieved *de facto* independence in Rome. Justinian's reconquest of Italy and the stationing of a Byzantine Duke in Rome were very much humiliating to the popes and the Lombard invasion of Byzantine empire in Italy was considered by the popes a suitable occasion to emancipate themselves from the Byzantine control. The imperial government of Byzantium did nothing to prevent the Lombard advance towards exarchate of Ravenna. The popes, under the circumstances, had of necessity to assume civil control and save the city of Rome from the Lombard attack. At times the popes found it politic to side with the Lombards.

Roman Pope resented tutelage of the Eastern Emperor

Justinian's temporary reconquest of Italy humiliating to the Pope

It was at a critical moment of the Lombard invasion of Italy that Pope Gregory I (590–604) came to occupy the papal throne. The invading Lombards had seized the papal lands in north Italy and menaced papal lands in central Italy as well as Rome itself. Gregory thought it advisable to remain on good terms with Byzantium but it was he rather than the Byzantine Duke that saved Rome from capture by the Lombard King Agilulf and the Lombard Duke of Spoleto.

Pope Gregory I (590–604)



During the pontificate of Gregory II (715–31) the Lombards menaced what was left of the papal lands in central and north-central Italy. Gregory II allied himself with the Lombards and even prevented the levy of a tax on Italy by the Byzantine government. An expedition sent from Byzantium to enforce obedience was beaten off with the help of the Lombards. This Lombard-Papal alliance lasted till the end of Gregory's life and the Lombard king Liutprand honoured this friendship by handing over to Gregory all lands conquered within the Roman Duchy of Byzantium but not belonging to the papacy.

*Gregory II
(715–31)*

*Lombard-
Papal
alliance*

It goes without saying that Lombard-Papal alliance could at best be a temporary, opportunistic step. In fact, the real danger to the papal state in Italy was the Lombard king rather than the Byzantine emperor.

*Real danger
for Pope was
Lombardy*

Pope Gregory III (731–41) was sufficiently conscious of this and took the momentous step of turning to the rising Frankish house for support against the Lombard menace. The price for the bargain offered by Gregory was a protectorate over the city of Rome to Charles Martel for the aid to be rendered. But three missions to Charles Martel did not succeed. Gregory's successor Stephen II, however, succeeded in getting response from Charles Martel's son Pipin the Short. Pipin at the moment (751) was as much in need of papal support as the latter was in need of that of the former.

*Gregory III
(731–41):
sought
Frankish
support
against the
Lombards*

*Pipin's
helping hand*

The Frankish mayor of the palace Pipin decided to overthrow the phantom Merovingian dynasty and make himself King both in fact and name. Naturally, he needed a seeming legal authorisation for a completely illegal act. Pope saw in this implied recognition or authorisation which he accorded, the advantage of a valuable precedent. At this psychological moment the Lombard king Aistulf drove the

*Pipin's
subtle policy
in helping the
Pope*

*Pope
Stephen II
suppliant at
the door of
Pipin*

Byzantines out of the exarchate of Ravenna and made himself the undisputed master of the whole of north and north-central Italy, and in the next year threatened Rome itself. Stephen II became a suppliant at the door of Pipin. The Pope betook himself to the court of Pipin, anointed him King and in return received from Pipin the promise of the gift of all lands taken from the empire by the Lombards to the papacy as also the protection of the Franks.

*Pipin's
help to the
Pope against
the Lombard
king*

Pipin kept his promise by undertaking two expeditions against Aistulf, the Lombard king and by an actual deed donated all the territories of the Byzantine empire taken from the Lombards to the Pope as temporal possession to be held by the Pope as an Italian prince. This prevented Lombard conquest of Italy and unification of Italy under the same control. The Italian unification had to wait till 1870.

*Pope's aim
at supplant-
ing Byzan-
tine empire
in Italy*

The motives behind the papal alliance with the Frankish house are clear enough. The Popes were out to supplant the Byzantine empire in Italy and to assume both clerical as well as civil control of the country. This was prompted by secular ambition and also by the fact that under the circumstances of the time the Byzantine emperors were busy in defending themselves near at home which precluded their sending any material help to the importunities of the Pope under pressure of Lombard invasion. The strength of the Frankish house and its nearness to Rome must have been further grounds for the Pope to appeal to the Franks for aid. Moreover, the *Iconoclastic* controversy had embittered the relations between the papacy and Byzantium.

*Embitterment
of feelings
between the
Pope and
Byzantium
over Icono-
clastic
controversy*

*Franks
zealous
Christians*

From the Frankish point of view support of the papacy was deemed as an authorisation of a perfectly illegal act of overthrowing the sham Merovingian dynasty. This apart, the Franks were Christians of only two hundred years' standing and

naturally the converts' zeal was there in them, and it was considered an act of piety to render services to the Church. Lordship over the Lombards and protectorate over Rome as was inherent in the position of *Patricius*, and protectorate over the papacy were certainly quite in line with the growing power and prestige of the Frankish house.

*Pipin—
Roman
Patricius*

Under Pipin's successor Charles the Great or Charlemagne, who by inheritance was the overlord of the Lombards and the protector of the Papal States, the need for help again arose. The Lombards renewed their attack. Charles answered the Papal appeal for help with no loss of time. He overran all Lombardy, conquered the Lombard duchies of Benevento and Spoleto, and himself assumed the title of Lombard king. The Lombard kingdom was absorbed into the Frankish. Additional campaigns brought Corsica, Dalmatia and Istria under the Frankish kingdom which had now grown into an empire.

*Charle-
magne's
help to the
Pope*

The alliance between the Papacy and the Frankish house was thus giving dividends. The same process of depending on the Frankish help led Pope Leo III, when man-handled by enemies, to run to Charles the Great then in Westphalia in the midst of his campaigns. Charles escorted Leo to Rome, held a seeming enquiry into the allegations against Leo and after declaring him clear of all these charges replaced him on the Papal chair. Leo III saw in Charles the emperor of the west, in fact, if not in name. Somewhat due to his personal gratitude, somewhat due to his realisation of the inescapable truth that Charles was going to be the emperor of the west whether the papacy liked it or not, led him to crown Charles as Emperor (800). The alliance between the papacy and the Franks, thus culminated in the coronation of Charles the Great and the breaking off of Italy from the Eastern Empire.

*Charle-
magne's help
to Pope Leo
III who saw
in the
Frankish
king a new
emperor for
the west*

*Pipin's
division of
his kingdom
between
Charles or
Charlemagne
and
Carloman*

*Death of
Carloman
left Charles
master of
entire
Frankish
dominion*

*Aims of his
war policy*

*Extension of
empire and
Christianity*

*Numerous
campaigns*

2/ Charles the Great (768-814) : The Frankish custom prescribed division of the kingdom among the sons of the king. In conformity with this old and evil custom, the Frankish kingdom was divided by Pipin between his two sons—Charles and Carloman, as he lay dying in 768. It seemed for a time that civil war between brothers, Charles master of all the Frankish lands of Austrasia and Neustria, from the Main to the Channel, as well as of the western half of the newly acquired Aquitaine, and Carloman master of Burgundy, Swabia, whole of the Mediterranean coast from the Alps to the border of Spain and eastern Aquitaine, would end the rising power of the Frankish monarchy. The reason for such a possibility was that Charles and Carloman were never friendly. But Providence saved the situation; Carloman died in 771 leaving Charles master of the entire Frankish realm. Carloman's widow and son fled to Lombardy where they got asylum in the court of Desiderius. "If Carloman had been granted many days on earth, we may be sure that the history of the last quarter of the eighth century would have repeated the old fratricidal wars of the Merovings."

(a) **Character of his Wars :** Charles' reign, was, in large part, a chronicle of wars, the purposes of which were: (i) to extend the frontiers of his dominions, (ii) to establish and defend the frontiers, and (iii) to convert the heathens to Christianity. His policy, therefore, was not solely aggressive. True to the Frankish ideal and tradition, Charles considered himself the champion of Christianity against the heathen Saxons, Slavs, Saracens, etc., and as such we often find that his conquests were followed by baptism of the conquered people and establishment of bishoprics in the conquered territories.

Charles led no less than fifty-four campaigns both in person and through his sons and other

lieutenants. Five of these were against the Lombards, eighteen against the Saxons, three against the Frisians and the Danes, four against the Slavs, two against the Gascons, five against the Moslems in Italy, two against the Byzantines, and two against the Bretons. The year 790 was such a remarkably peaceful year that the chronicler commented: *This year was without war*. It must, however, be mentioned that it was successful warfare that earned Charles the appellation *The Great* or Charlemagne.

(b) **His Conquests** : By inheritance Charles was the overlord of the Lombards and Protector of the papacy. The title *Patricius* conferred on Pipin by the papacy was also his legitimate inheritance. At the initial stage of his reign Charles married the daughter of Desiderius, the Lombard king despite protestation by the Pope, for the Lombards and the papacy were sworn enemies; and for a time it seemed that the long and traditional relationship between the Frankish monarchy and the papacy was going to be married. But after a year Charles repudiated the marriage with the daughter of the Lombard king and sent her back to her father. This at once restored the cordiality between the Pope and Charles.

*His marriage
with
daughter of
the Lombard
king
Repudiated*

Desiderius was very much resentful of Charles' conduct in repudiating the marriage. Further, he bore the traditional enmity to the papacy. He renewed his attack against Rome. Charles answered the appeal of the Pope; he also remembered the resentment of the Lombard king at the repudiation of the marriage. Charles besieged the Lombard capital Pavia for nine months and fighting for a year continuously, he overran the whole of Lombardy. He also conquered the Lombard duchies of Benevento and Spoleto; the Lombard kingdom was annexed to the Frankish. He also assumed the crown of Lombardy. It must, however, be noted

*Pope's appeal
to Charles for
help against
Lombard
attack*

*Charles
sought to be
real Patricius
and Protector
of the Holy
See*

here that his conquest of the duchy of Benevento was never complete. From Lombardy Charles made for Italy where he was received with all honour. He confirmed Pipin's grant of the ex-archate of Ravenna to the Pope, which strengthened the temporal power of the Pope. Yet Charles 'made it quite clear that as *Patricius* of the Romans and the Protector of the Holy See he regarded himself as the actual sovereign of this territory, to whose orders the Popes must harken in governing it.' The effect of the Lombard conquest was the breaking up of a power which might have formed the nucleus of a united Italy.

*Bavarian
Duke
Tassilo's
rebellion
put down—
Bavaria
incorporated
into the
Frankish
empire*

(c) **Against Bavaria :** The Bavarians were the second German nation to be incorporated to the Frankish dominions. Bavaria was theoretically under the suzerainty of the Emperor for a long time past, but in reality, it enjoyed autonomy under its own dukes, which was tantamount to independence. The Bavarian church was also similarly autonomous of the Pope. Thus it was to the interest of both the Pope and the Emperor to reduce Bavaria to complete subjection. Tassilo, duke of Bavaria rebelled in 788 and contested his theoretical allegiance to the Frankish crown. Charles invaded and conquered Bavaria and incorporated it into the Frankish empire after compelling Tassilo to renounce the claim of himself and his family over Bavaria.

*Heathen
Saxons
offered a
double
problem:
Turbulence
and opposi-
tion to
Christianity*

(d) **Against the Saxons :** The third and the most important German nation to be conquered by Charles was the Saxons. The conquest of Saxony was difficult for various reasons. There were no towns in Saxony, as such, the Saxons could not have been conquered by taking any important stronghold. The whole country had to be overrun. Again, the Saxons, like almost all other tribes of Germany were a fierce people, heathen in religion, with scant regard for law, human or divine. The task before Charles was doubly difficult as he wanted

to accomplish a double conquest, conquest by arms and Christianity.

In 775 Charles overran the whole of Westphalia and received its submission. The Saxons of that part were all converted into Christianity. But their submission was more seeming than real; they detested Christianity and owed allegiance to Charles out of fear. Eight campaigns were necessary before the turbulent Saxons, fighting under their national hero Witikind, could be subdued. The conquest begun by arms was completed by Christianity, which in its turn had to be completed by force. Bishoprics grew up in Verden, Bremen, Halberstadt, Hildresheim, Paderborn, Munster and Osnarbruck.

*Westphalia
overrun*

(e) **Against the Slavs :** While Charles was engaged in subduing the Saxons, his northern boundaries were being disturbed by the Abotrites, a section of the Slavic people. But their disunity and weakness made it easy for Charles to conquer them and even make them fight against the Saxons.

*Easy
victory of
Charles over
the Slavs*

In the east the Slavs called the Bohemians were also threatening the boundaries of Charles' dominions. Charles led a campaign against the Bohemians in 805-06 and compelled them to acknowledge his supremacy although they were eventually left more or less autonomous.

*Bohemia
acknowledged
Charles'
supremacy*

The Danes were a continual source of danger to the dominions of Charles. They were always inclined to render assistance to the Saxons. In order to prevent them from pursuing such a course, Charles established a Danish mark in the isthmus between the Saxons and the Danes.

*Establishment
of Danish
mark*

Towards the Danube Charles extended his dominions by defeating the Huns whom he, finally, conquered and drove out of the Danubian region. Charles built up a ring of *marches* or *marks* in the north and the east. Towards the west he established

*Ring of
marches
round the
empire*

the mark of Brittany. The only side to be controlled was the south.

*Conquest of
Barcelona—
Spanish
mark*

(f) **Against Spain :** Charles' initial attempt against Spain was routed with a great loss. In order to stem the tide of the Saracen onslaught, he established a Spanish mark in 795 and in 797 he conquered Barcelona and added it to the Spanish mark. In this regard, Charlemagne was pursuing the policy of Charles Martel. He also drove the Saracens out of Corsica, Sardinia and Balearic isles.

*Entire German
population
except the
Anglo-Saxons
and the Scan-
dinavians
brought within
Charles'
empire*

(g) **Extent of Charles' Empire : Limitations of his Policy of Conquest :** The conquests of Charles gave him a vast empire and the whole of the Germanic population except the Anglo-Saxons and the Scandinavians were brought within his empire. Beyond the actual boundaries of the German territories, the empire of Charles established a ring of marks to protect the frontiers against external attacks.

*Weak policy
towards
Southern
Italy and
Sicily*

But now the question arises: although at the time when Charles was operating, the southern Italy, Sicily were weak and almost unprotected, what prevented him from bringing those areas within his empire? Again, Spain hardly drew that amount of attention from Charles that would have won for him all the splendour of the Spanish wealth. Charles, of course, gained a very important accession to strength and an extension to his empire by conquering what he called the Spanish mark—the territories between the Pyrenees and the Ebro. But all the same he did not seek to go to the logical conclusion of his policy of conquest, neither in respect of Italy nor in respect of Spain.

*Charles a
German first,
Italian
emperor next*

In answer to these charges we may point out that (i) Charles was first a German, and an Italian emperor next. Naturally, it was his German interests that determined the course of his conquests.

The nature of the arrangements made for the protection of the German territories, by forming round them a ring of marks, will prove beyond doubt that Charles attached more importance to his German position than to the newly acquired imperial one. (ii) In the second place, the completeness that he achieved in respect of the conquest of the German territories and the German peoples, his desperate and tedious wars against the Saxons, etc., also point to the same conclusion. (iii) In the third place, we should remember the generally irreconcilable nature of the Saxon subjects of Charles. Whenever he withdrew his arms, the Saxons broke out into fresh rebellion. This was a hard fact to overlook. Naturally, Charles could not have possibly guided his energy more than what the circumstances permitted, without leaving his own country open to Saxon conquest. (iv) In the fourth place, Charles had waged numerous wars. Expansion of his empire had been considerable. If he had left out the prospects of sure success in south Italy and Sicily and the brilliant and the attractive prizes in Spain, it was due to his more pressing need for the security and consolidation of his German territories. Had Charles been engaged in expansion without consolidation, the admirably efficient administrative system which he had reared up would have been impossible and the posterior Europe would have been poorer in that they would have been deprived of the prodigious system of administration from which they borrowed so much. (v) In the fifth place, it must be noted that the fatigue of incessant wars must have been telling upon the strength and finances of the empire. But above all it must be pointed out, the German interest was the supreme consideration that kept Charles away from the conquest of South Italy, Sicily or Spain. And Hallam puts the situation as follows: "Italy, however, be the cause what it might, seems to have tempted Charlemagne far less than the dark forests of Germany."

*Completeness
of the
conquest of
Germany*

*Saxons never
reconciled :
Expansion
and consoli-
dation simul-
taneous*

*Policy of
prolonged
war of
conquest led
to financial
weakness*

*Church held
the west
united when
the empire
died out*

3/ Coronation of Charles the Great : 800 A.D. CIRCUMSTANCES LEADING TO THE CORONATION : After the fall of the Roman Empire, the parts held by the barbarians had no political relation with the central government of Rome and gradually the idea of an Empire died out. But soon the Christian church, through the spread of Christianity, furnished a kind of unity which the now-forgotten memories of the Empire could not and did not afford. Since the west was Christianised by Rome, she had a sort of authority which kept the entire west united to her by the ties of common beliefs, ritual, practice and organisation.

*Former parts
of the Roman
empire sus-
tained by the
thought that
empire would
rise again*

If the barbarian-held parts were united to Rome by the common ties of religion, the rest of the broken-up Empire in the west during the sixth and the seventh centuries looked to Rome with thoughts and hopes that the Roman Empire was only in abeyance, not extinct, and a time would come when the empire would rise again. But the deliverer, the leader of this revival was not to come from the feeble, corrupt and exhausted soil of Rome but from the Frankish house which had only recently been brought under the pale of Christianity.

*Legally and
technically
the Pope
was under
the Eastern
Emperor*

The Popes of Rome were technically and legally under the authority of the Emperor at Constantinople, wherefrom they received no protection, no help. There were also theological differences between Rome and Constantinople as were exemplified in the Iconoclastic controversy. The cruelty of Irene, the prejudice against women as a class, all this, made the authority of Constantinople hateful to Rome. The Romans pushed themselves, for reasons both of security against the Lombards and hatred towards Constantinople, increasingly into the arms of the Frankish house. The growth of the Roman church by way of Christianisation of the Anglo-Saxons, of the Germans and others, and also of the Frankish house and the close alliance between

*Authority of
the Eastern
Empire
hateful to
Rome*

the two, made the revival of the Empire in the west possible. Thirty years of wars and conquests brought the west under the single sceptre of Charles. Further, he himself being a champion of Christianity, brought about a unity of conscience along with the union of the peoples of west under one sceptre. Thus the stage was laid for the coronation which was to stress this religio-political unity all the more.

*West
brought
under the
sway of
Charles*

At this stage of the history of Rome we find the growth of a party hostile to the papacy, for it represented one man's power, which the party did not like. The party wanted the revival of the glory of Rome under a Republic. In 798 a sedition broke out in Rome. Pope Leo III was attacked by a band of armed men headed by two officials of his court, was wounded and left for dead. Leo with great difficulty escaped to Spoleto and thence went to Charles' camp at Westphalia where the latter had been conducting the suppression of a revolt. Charles received his spiritual father with great respect, heard him and sent him back with a strong escort to Rome only to follow in person himself. In the Autumn of 799 Charles appeared personally at Rome, held a seeming enquiry into the allegations against Leo, declared him innocent and reinstated him to the Papal chair.

*Rise of a
Republican
Party in
Rome—
opposed to
the Pope*

*Attack on
Pope Leo III:
Charles
comes to
Rome and
reinstates
Pope*

The most active cause of the coronation was the fervent gratitude of Leo due to his deliverance by Charles. Soon after Leo paid the debt of gratitude by crowning his saviour as Emperor on the Christmas day, 800. On the Christmas day when Charles was attending the Service at St. Peter's, the Pope rose from his chair as the reading of the gospel was finished and placed the imperial crown on the head of Charles, as he was kneeling in worship, with the following words: "To Charles Augustus crowned by God, the great and peace-loving Emperor, be life and victory." The Frankish warriors and the Italian clergy and the citizens joined in the cry and hailed him as Emperor.

*Gratitude of
the Pope:
Crown put
on Charles'
head*

*Charles
hailed as
Emperor*

*Charles'
reluctance to
the corona-
tion?*

(a) **Coronation a Surprise** : On the authority of Einhard, Charles' secretary, we know that Charles was wont to declare that the whole proceedings of the coronation were forced on him and his consent was not obtained. He felt it so much and so strongly that he would say that he would never have entered St. Peter's that day if he had smelt it before. It is natural for us to ask—why this reluctance? That Charles used to declare, that the coronation was a surprise to him, cannot be doubted, for, there is no good reason why Einhard (also spelt as Eginhard) should have reported such a thing unless it were true, and particularly, after a long time when there could have been no motive to inspire him to distort the real fact.

*Coronation
no surprise
although
Charles was
reluctant in
receiving the
Crown in
the manner
it came upon
his head*

But although it is quite possible that Charles was reluctant in receiving the crown in the manner it was actually given him, yet it is difficult to believe that it was a surprise. For, in the first place, his great power, his extensive conquests, his protection of the church and services in her behalf, all marked him out as the most suitable person for the imperial crown. In the second place, only a short time before the coronation Charles had sent an ambassador to the court of Constantinople to broach the subject of his marriage with Queen Irene. It is quite legitimate to surmise that the proposal for contracting such a marriage was motivated by his desire to assume the crown of the west with a legal touch. In fact, imperial crown was the goal towards which the policy of the Franks had for many years pointed and Charles 'himself in sending before him to Rome many of his spiritual and temporal magnates, in summoning thither his son Pipin from a war against the Lombards of Benevento, had shown that he expected some more than ordinary results from his journey to the imperial city. Moreover, Alcuin of York, the trusted adviser of Charles in matters religious and literary, appears, from one of his

*Charles'
negotiation
with Queen
Irene for
marriage*

*Alcuin's
presentation
of a copy of*

extant letters, to have sent as a Christmas gift to his royal pupil a carefully and superbly adorned copy of the Scriptures with the words—*ad splendorem imperialis potentise*. This has been taken as a conclusive evidence that the plan had been settled before hand. Further, as it has been pointed out, the Pope would not have ventured to take such a momentous step for which he had not at least the seeming consent from Charles. The assembly of the lay and the clerical persons seemed to have been prepared for the whole thing as is evidenced by their hailing the coronation by repeating what Leo uttered and this could not have remained a closed secret to Charles.

the Scriptures with the words 'Imperial potentate' evidenced the existence of the plan

The general acclaim not sudden but prepared beforehand

The only reasonable conclusion that we could arrive at, is that Charles probably had given a sort of a vague consent to his coronation. The Pope seized the opportunity on the Christmas day although Charles would have liked to receive it at a different time and in a more diplomatic manner. It has also been pointed out by some writers that Charles was unwilling to receive the crown because he foresaw the danger of receiving it from the hands of the Pope, the danger which actually followed from the coronation. But Bryce rejects such a view and is of opinion that it was doubtful if Charles actually foresaw the future pretensions of the papacy. It had also been argued that Charles was afraid of the jealous hostility of the Eastern Court and what he had actually wanted was to have a legality for his imperial status. The precipitate action of the Pope only cut through all the deep laid schemes of Charles.

Vague consent?

Charles unwilling to receive the crown from the Pope: Bryce rejects the view

Charles perhaps afraid of the jealousy of the Eastern Court

(b) Was Coronation a revolt ? What was its Legality ? There could hardly be any doubt that Charles was the most important personality of his times and Pope Leo III by choosing him the Emperor made the most suitable choice. The Romans were easily persuaded to believe that the act of choosing

Pope Leo had no legal competence to invest the Crown

The assembly gathered at St. Peters was no 'Senate and people of Rome' Three theories : Charles won the Crown, Pope as successor to St. Peter deposed the Eastern Emperor and gave the crown to Charles and the Roman people elected the Emperor

Charles was only meet and proper. But the question legitimately arises as to what extent the incident of coronation was legal. It has been argued that although the Romans hailed and consented to such an act 'it was nevertheless, a revolt.' In fact, there is much to be said about or rather, against the legality of the coronation of Charles. Certainly, the Pope had no right to give away a crown which did not belong to him. Further, it cannot be argued that the assembly of the lay and the clerical persons at St. Peter's was the ancient 'Senate and People of Romé' who could elect their sovereign. In fact, there grew up three theories about the coronation : First, that Charles won the crown by his conquests and was indebted to none but himself. This theory was advanced by the imperial party. Secondly, the Papal party at a later time argued that the Pope by virtue of his power as the successor to St. Peter, deposed the Emperor at Constantinople and conferred the crown on Charles. Thirdly, the people of Rome claimed that by choosing Charles as their Emperor, they exercised their ancient right of electing their king.

Pope's conduct tantamount to rebellion

From the above theories as well as from the contemporary records it is very difficult to put any technical character to the whole proceedings. It goes without saying that the Pope acted without any authority, for certainly, he had no right to give away the crown, and in so doing he revolted against the lawful authority of the Eastern Empire. The coronation, therefore, besides its having been a revolt, was an illegal act. Bryce however, points out that Leo gave the crown not by virtue of any right as the head of the church but only as the instrument of God's Providence, he being the only person capable of leading and defending the Christian Commonwealth.

Secondly, the coronation cannot be regarded as the right of the Roman people to elect their king for

the simple reason that the assembly of persons at St. Peter's did not represent the decayed 'Senate and People of Rome'. Bryce, however, is of opinion that the Roman people did not elect Charles, but by their applause, they only accepted the Chief presented to them by the Pope in obedience to Divine Providence. The chain of events leading to the coronation was more modest than has been claimed by many. For, it had not add to the power of Charlemagne, nor did it bring any additional dominion to his empire.

The assembly, at St. Peter's—no Roman Senate

Thirdly, it has been pointed out, Charles did not seize the crown, he received it as naturally coming to him as the legitimate consequence of the power that he had already been enjoying. Nevertheless, the impression is irresistible that the act was irregular and illegal and it was for this that no legal explanation of the act was sought to be given by the contemporaries.

Crown came to Charles as legitimate consequence of power

Bryce, however, concludes that none of the contemporary evidences, nor the subsequent theories about the event contained the whole truth. He says "Charles did not conquer, nor the Pope give nor the people elect. As the act was unprecedented, so it was extra-legal; it was a revolt of the ancient western empire against a daughter who had become a mistress." The whole proceedings were so much precipitate and without precedent that no better explanation is probably possible.

Bryce's conclusion

Barraclough rightly remarks that the Coronation of Charlemagne marked the 'birth of western European civilisation. That civilisation had been in gestation for many generations; thence forward began its own independent existence'. From this event the Carolingian civilisation was filled with a new life and spirit and began to look forward.

(c) **Importance of the Coronation :** Bryce points out that from the moment of the coronation of

*Bryce's
contradictory
observations*

800 A.D. 'modern history begins'. Elsewhere he calls the event as the 'central event of the Middle Ages', one from which the world received much and without which the history of the world would have been different. These apparently contradictory observations of Bryce are not actually paradoxical nor irreconcilable. Indeed the coronation of Charles combined in it significance and consequences, at once immediate and far-reaching, mediaeval and modern. By reason of the fact that it was the central event of the Middle Ages, it did not cease to be the fountain head of many modern tendencies. It brought about a revolution in the political concept of the Medieval Europe as it became the central event of the Middle Ages, and from it flowed influences, diverse and numerous which gave rise to problems which the succeeding generations had to grapple with.

*Triumph
of law and
order*

The most immediate and ostensible effect of the coronation was the triumph of law and order over chaos and barbarism. The early Roman Empire had fallen into disruption, woes and miseries; lack of government, lack of security, both social and political, brought everything into a melting pot. Charles' coronation, by bringing about the unity of the whole of the Christendom with the exception of very few places, retrieved the Roman Empire from its ruins, and united 'the last great emperor of Rome and the first great emperor of the west'.

*Idea that the
empire was
in abeyance*

Secondly, to be sure, there existed no Roman empire in reality, yet there was a common belief that it was not extinct, although in abeyance. The coronation registered this common belief that the Roman Empire was sure to rise again. So the event was never thought to be a strange one, for, it only translated into practice what the people had been cherishing in the heart of their hearts for more than two centuries. The tradition of western Europe organised as a whole under the Roman Emperor

was still so strong that when it was actually reunited under a German, it seemed to the contemporaries that it was nothing more or less than a return to the Golden Age.

Thirdly, the immediate effect of the coronation so far as Germany was concerned, was the enhancement of the prestige of the German nation as a whole and Charlemagne as their representative, in particular.

*Enhancement
of German
prestige*

Fourthly, the coronation took place under vague and uncertain circumstances. There was no clear definition of the rights or powers of the parties to it. The Pope gave something which he had not the right to give and the king received something which he had no legal right to do so, although, he had the power to accept. Thus the vagueness of the whole proceedings gave handle to the papal party in subsequent times to assert their superiority over the Emperor and put forward fantastic papal claims. The imperial party also did much of the obeisance made by the Pope while crowning Charles as the Emperor—God's chosen. Again, the people of Rome shouted approval of the election of Charles as the Emperor and this led to their later claims to approve imperial elections. Thus the coronation ceremony brought in its train seeds of future struggle between the Empire and the Papacy, which was in fact, the central theme of the Middle Ages.

Fifthly, the real importance of the coronation as Banachlough remarks, lay in Charlemagne's claim to independence even to equality with, the Empire in the East' which still claimed legal overlordship over the west. In 812 when the emperor of the East accepted Charles as emperor in the west, a major achievement was secured. By separating the empire into two independent ones left western Europe free to develop on its own traditions unhindered by the oriental tradition.

*Separation
from the
Eastern
Empire*

Sixthly, in the separation of the Western Empire from the Eastern, the will of the people, no less that of the Pope, triumphed. For, the Eastern Empire which failed to protect the Roman church and the Roman people both from the internal and external enemies, forfeited the right to allegiance of the Roman people and the Pope. Further, the Eastern Empire made itself all the more odious to the Romans by placing Irene, a woman, at once cruel and selfish to the imperial throne. The irrevocable breach between east and west was undoubtedly a turning point in history.

*Fusion of the
barbarian
and Roman
cultures*

Seventhly, the coronation effected the fusion of the barbarian and Roman cultures and thus gave rise to a newer and more vigorous civilisation.

*Beginning
of the Holy
Roman
Empire*

Eighthly, from the coronation of Charles is to be traced the beginning of the Holy Roman Empire, a theocratic state, which continued to exist as the foundation of the European states-system for many centuries to follow. It was not until the end of the Napoleonic wars that the Holy Roman Empire was thoroughly disintegrated.

*Foundation
of new,
scientific
administra-
tive system*

Ninthly, the coronation made the way straight for the foundation of a new and scientific administrative system which was brought into being by the efforts of Charles and which became the model for administrative improvements to the European states for many centuries to follow. From the administrative system of Charles Europe gained much in matters of administrative expedients; it left an abiding influence upon the administrative contrivances of Europe of the subsequent centuries.

*Peace and
calm resulted
in growth
of culture*

Tenthly peace and calm that resulted from the unity of the empire, comprising Roman, Christian and German elements, symbolised in the coronation, as also the patronage extended by Charles to art and learning gave rise to a very healthy and vigorous

literature, the influence of which persisted throughout many centuries that followed and even well within the modern times.

But except for the above points of view the importance of the coronation cannot be, rather must not be overrated. It did not make Charles ruler of the whole of the Western Europe. England, Spain and Scandinavian north, were not within his empire. Charles remained mainly and really a Frankish King, drew his revenues from his Frankish lands, selected his ministers and servants from the Franks. 'The seat of the his power was still in the lands of his Frankish forbears between Rhine, Moselle and Meuse'. The empire of Charles fell because the Frankish kingdom became weak. The empire would have survived if the Frankish kingdom remained strong.

The coronation symbolising the triumph of the German king, held out a model for the future German kings to undertake weary journeys to Rome for the papal recognition of their imperial dignity. The result was that, for seven hundred years the German kings could not free themselves of the idea that they must rule Italy. Much of the energy of the German kings was spent in Italy and the question of the national unity of Germany was left unsolved.

Criticism

Thus we see, that the coronation besides having been the central event of the Middle Ages, marked the beginning of certain tendencies which influenced modern times. A new age commenced with the coronation of Charles.

(d) **Charles' Administration :** Charles' system of government was in the main a continuation of the old Merovingian with certain improvements here and there for rendering it more centralised. Following the old Merovingian custom Charles divided his vast dominions into administrative districts known

*Division of
the empire
into adminis-
trative
districts*

as counties, at the head of each of which, there was a Count. The frontier districts were, however, organised into marches and placed under border Counts. The Counts were held responsible for the administration of their respective counties. The Counts seem to have held office for life and even there was a tendency to make the office hereditary. But they could be deposed for cause. They were by no means independent, but were assistants and subordinates to Charles. All the dukedoms except those of Benevento, Brittany and Gascony, were abolished, for, they were too strong a menace to the unity of the empire. But in no circumstances were the existing dukes given an independent power of action. They were completely under the control of the Emperor.

*Emperor at the
top: General
Assembly*

At the centre there was the Emperor who stood at the top of the administrative framework. There was also a Diet or General Assembly, which used to meet at the spring time every year. It was a survival of the old Teutonic *Folk Moot*. This body met every year in spring for giving the Emperor advice and information. It was not a legislative body but an advisory one and like all advisory bodies made recommendations and gave advice and information which the Emperor was at liberty either to accept or reject. This becomes manifest when we find that some of the decrees and capitularies of the reign of Charles were drawn in concurrence with the Diet and the rest at the free will of Charles himself.

*Direct control
by the
Emperor*

Now, the method of linking up the counties with the centre was a novel one. It was a two-fold method. First, the Emperor had a direct control over the administration of the counties, for he had all the Counts under him and under his complete control.

*Missi
dominici*

Secondly, a more important one, was the system of *missi dominici*. Charles had good reason for fear

that the Counts who were often selected from the strongest local families would eventually make their offices hereditary and make the county the Count's private jurisdiction. To prevent such an eventuality and to supervise the Counts and check their frequent abuses of power, Charles created a new class of officials, *missi dominici*, the most characteristic part of his administration, who were itinerant commissioners and whose duty it was to visit at stated intervals all the parts of a given circuit. Their duties had been laid down elaborately in Charles' capitularies about the *missi* in 802. Charles ordered them "to investigate and report to him any inequality or injustice that might appear in the law as then constituted, to enquire diligently into every case where any man complained that he had been dealt with unjustly by any one, and in the fear of God to render justice to all, to the Holy churches of God, to the poor, to widows and orphans and to the whole people; they are not to be hindered in the doing of justice by the flattery or bribery of any one, by their partiality for their own friends or by the fear of powerful men." The *missi* were also intended to serve as a direct link between the people and the Emperor to whom they submitted their reports. A *missi* usually consisted of two, a lay man and a bishop or an abbot. This dual character of the *missi* represented the dual character of the Emperor as the head of the state and of the church.

*Varied
functions of
the Missi
dominici*

It must be noted here that Charles had placed his three sons over the three parts of his empire. But these princes only served as a link between the Emperor and the Counts. Thus Charles' administration became a thoroughly centralised one in spite of the fact that the Counts were selected from strong local families with considerable local influence.

*Royal
princes
placed in
parts of the
empire*

Under Charles such German tribes as still had no written laws received their laws in a codified form. But it must be noted that Charles did not do

*Old German
laws retained*

anything to disturb the old basis of the German laws. Each group within the empire was allowed to retain its own local laws and customs. But to meet the immediate problems of administration Charles drew up capitularies, orders and decrees which gave rise to a great body of laws under him.

*Administra-
tion of
justice*

Administration of justice was quite efficient. There were three sessions of the criminal courts in the counties during a year for trying the most serious criminal cases. Besides, there were courts for less serious crimes. Freemen were not obliged to attend courts meant for less serious crimes. Apart from these there was a court of seven judges chosen for life from each locality, for every county. This body of judges acted as assessors of punishment.

*Military
service*

Charles' constant demand for military service compelled him to organise the military services on a new and more direct basis. He provided that military service should be restricted to some specific regions rather than extend over the whole empire. He also made military service dependent on property ownership. Persons occupying three or more hides of lands were obliged to come fully equipped. This military organisation on the basis of ownership of land helped the development of feudalism.

Taxation

The old Roman system of taxation had fallen off by the time of Charles. Citizens no longer paid taxes to the state except for certain kinds of private lands. They served the state in various capacities both in the civil and military departments. Public works, at least a few of them, were done with forced labour. The most burdensome duties were the judicial and military. Freemen were obliged to attend the courts summoned by the Counts and to render military service in the field. Charles' constant demand for military services from the freemen compelled many of them to relegate themselves voluntarily to the position of the serfs in order to

avoid services in distant lands and almost incessantly. This also gave rise to the feudal serfs.

(e) **Character of Charles' Administration :** *Irresponsibility of the emperor*

At the time when Charles became Emperor, it was commonly supposed that the Emperor held office directly from God and to God alone was the Emperor responsible for what he did. This divine origin of the Emperor made personal government inevitable. A close analysis of the government of Charles leaves us in no doubt that his government was very much personal. Shortly after his coronation Charles compelled all his subjects to swear that they would be not only good citizens but also good Christians. Charles' concept of the Empire was a theocratic one, wherein the Emperor was to be the head of both the state and the church and the citizens were to be both citizens and Christians. Thus the first and foremost characteristic of Charles' government was that it was personal both in lay and religious matters.

Charles by his personal efforts gave unity to the Empire and did much of the work of its governance. He moved from part to part of his empire, fighting rebels, administering justice, conducting trials, settling difficulties and problems of administration and keeping the governmental machinery in motion. It was his personal efforts that succeeded in keeping the heterogeneous elements of his empire together. Everything was done in the name of the Emperor and with the consent or sanction of the Emperor. The different parts of the Empire, the different departments of the government, all converged in the person of the Emperor. The Diet only had an advisory capacity. The capitularies, the orders and the decrees of Charles' time bear unmistakably his personal impress. The Emperor was represented throughout the realm by his personal appointees, the Counts and the princes who held offices at the pleasure of the Emperor. The *missi dominici* kept the

Personal character of the government

Emperor abreast of all things going on in the different parts of the Empire. The Pope was to be no better than a subordinate official of the Emperor for assisting him to discharge the ecclesiastical duties besides his secular ones. Thus it is doubtless that the government of Charles was out and out a personal one.

Despotism

But then, was it despotism? Personal government is indeed the prelude to despotism. But Charles' government although personal and centralised was full of regard for the well-being of the people. (i) He allowed the different parts of his realm to retain their local laws and customs. Where the existing laws could not or did not solve the rising problems, Charles drew up decrees and capitularies to fill up the gap. This was more or less a compromise between local sentiments and imperial control and took away much of the galling annoyances of a centralised and personal rule. (ii) Charles' system of obtaining information on every matter of state importance from the members of the Diet, which used to meet in spring time every year, kept him aware of the prevalent condition of the people and the country. (iii) The nature of the duties that the *missi dominici* were obliged to perform, removed even the slightest chances of any miscarriage of justice, any maltreatment of persons and any corruption in the administration. This makes it clear that Charles was highly solicitous of the well-being of his subjects. (iv) His patronage of art and learning and above all his special care to see education spread among his subjects showed him in a brighter light than many of the rulers of the world. He established schools and laboured hard to instruct his subjects. His patronage of art and learning resulted in a revival of learning which is known as the Carolingian renaissance.

Welfare the basic

Thus the real motive of Charles' personal government was not self-aggrandisement but to seek after

the welfare, both material and moral, of his subjects. So his rule, we may conclude, was a 'personal rule without despotism'.

*character of
the govern-
ment*

(f) **Charles' Ecclesiastical Policy :** Charles was a devout Christian and a zealous supporter of the Christian religion. He regularly attended the Church and was very particular that rites celebrated in it should be performed with the greatest decorum. His attitude to Christianity and the Church determined his ecclesiastical policy. He made strenuous efforts to realise the ideal of Augustine's *City of God* on earth. His government was in aim, a theocracy, that is based on divine precepts. With the enlargement of the Frankish dominions there was also an enforcement of his own religion on the non-Christians. His coronation at the hands of the Pope in 800 A.D., as if by inspiration, expressed the ideal of theocratic monarchy that he had in his mind. Coronation gave him a holy character and he thought himself to be God's anointed agent for the realisation of God's purpose. But Charles made no mistake about his own position, for after coronation he showed an increasing tendency to insist on the omnipotence of his authority in matters ecclesiastical and moral as in civil. Charles' reported displeasure, openly expressed, at the suddenness of the coronation by Pope Leo was possibly due to his willingness to avoid giving any handle to the Pope to lay any claim to indirect authority over the Emperor. In any case, Charles made it clear from the very beginning that he was the supreme head of the state and the Church and because it would not be possible for him to look into the details of both, the Pope was to act as his deputy in matters ecclesiastical. The very fact that soon after his coronation he compelled all his subjects above the age of twelve to take an oath of allegiance to him as the emperor, administered by the local clergy, made it clear that their allegiance was to the Emperor both as the head of the

*Ideal of City
of God on
earth*

*Pope
subordinated
to the
Emperor*

state and the Church. Charles also impressed upon his contemporaries that his empire was Roman as well as Holy, and it was with him that the idea of the Holy Roman Empire had started.

*Church an
imperial
department*

As it has been pointed out above, the Pope was to be no more than a subordinate officer of the Emperor, and the Church no more than an imperial department. Although the undefined nature of the coronation of 800 A.D. had led to incessant controversy in subsequent times, yet under Charles the relations between the Emperor and the Papacy was nothing more or less than what has been stated above. "Charlemagne himself, in fact and theory, was master of Empire, Papacy and Church. He was the God-given autocrat of Western Christendom."

*Charles'
overall
authority
over the
Church*

Charles kept up his authority over the Church by nominating bishops, controlling church property and summoning synods, and took a predominating share in the Church administration and in the definition of doctrine. The reform of the church in Gaul begun by Pipin was carried further by Charles. His capitularies and synodical canons gave a new sacred character to the church as also gave the church guidance and protection. In a series of capitularies drafted by his learned bishops and enforced by his own authority, Charles defined the authority and provinces of metropolitan, confirmed the jurisdiction of the bishops and abbots over their subjects and ordered suits between clerks and other persons to be heard by bishop and court jointly. That Charles considered the Papacy no more than a department under him is evident from his institution of *missi dominici* in which he compromised both lay and clerical officers.

*Extension
of Christianity*

Of the genuineness of his piety there can be no doubt. He was anxious to further the extension of Christianity, but he was no less anxious to purify the Church of the corruptions that threatened to

destroy its vitality. He encouraged Benedictine Rule as the normal Rule for monks and enforced regular payment of tithes to the Church, and extended grant of immunities to church lands. Under him if the bishops played an important part in secular government it was because they were king's subordinates in their ecclesiastical functions also. Even in the settlement of doctrinal problems Charles acted in all intents and purposes as the Pope's as well as bishops' superior. In three specific instances we find Charles having his own way in the settlement of doctrinal problems. In 787 when Iconoclasm, that is image worship was renewed in parts of the Byzantine empire with the Pope's consent, Charles allowed the Frankish church to retain only images and pictures as illustrations but not for worship. The Pope had to keep silence. Again in 794 at a synod at Frankfort Charles condemned the *Adoptionist view* of Christ held by the Spanish bishops. According to this view Christ was only the adopted son of God. Again, Charles retained, despite Pope's wish to the contrary, the Frankish addition to the creed in regard to the *Holy Ghost*.

*Charles not
entirely
against
Iconoclasm*

Charles' ideal of theocratic monarchy had the widest meaning. Apart from the supremacy that he exercised over the state and the Church, and apart from the precepts of divinity on which he based his empire making Christianity and Roman almost synonymous, Charles showed an unusual capacity for working into the details of both the civil and the ecclesiastical matters of his empire. He legislated on every possible ecclesiastical subject, church discipline, church property, education of the clergy, ecclesiastical punishments, rituals, church lands, church organisation, etc. His laws touched all ranks of the clergy. He controlled the personnel of the clergy, appointed all important church officials, presided over synods and councils. He interfered in questions of religious dogmas and would not even

*Theocratic
monarchy*

hesitate to dictate the Pope, as he had actually done on one occasion, to conform to what he himself believed.

*Contemporary
vices*

Although Charles was not free from vices that abounded in courts in those days, he tried his utmost to purify the Church, and many of the measures already mentioned above were adopted for no other purpose. Yet he had occasions to be often displeased with the conduct of the clergy and at times broke out in bitter reproof of their land-grabbing zeal. He had even adversely commented on their personal character and pointed out their bad command over language and grammar. "It was to this same clergy, whom he rebuked so bitterly for their worldly interests, that Charles turned to secure competent government officials, because he had nowhere else to turn. His policy, therefore, while it did produce some important results, was doomed—as is generally the case with the high intentioned rulers as expressed in legislation—to fall far short of its aim."

*Towering
personality*

(g) **Estimate of Charles :** Charles the Great also called Charlemagne, was undoubtedly one of the most towering personalities, who have left their impress upon the canvass of world history in bold strokes. Like most of those who led the world, Charlemagne was many great things in one and was so great just because the workings of his genius were so harmonious. Probably no one else has more thoroughly taken hold of the imagination of the people as did Charlemagne. He was more than a barbarian warrior, more than an astute negotiator, he was in fact, a combination of rare qualities and it will be difficult to characterise him by any of the qualities chiefly. He was hardly inferior to Julius Caesar or Napoleon in respect of the qualities by which both of them impress us. He possessed the vivid and unresting energy which swept him over

*Not inferior
to Caesar or
Napoleon*

Europe in campaign after campaign; which sought a field for its workings in theology and science, in law and literature, no less than in politics and war. The epoch made by Charlemagne in the history of the world, the illustrious families which prided themselves in him as their progenitor, the very legends of romance which are full of his fabulous exploits, have cast a lustre around his head and testify to the greatness that has embodied itself in the name. None indeed, of Charlemagne's wars can be compared with the Saraccenic victory of Charles Martel, but that was a contest for freedom, his for conquest; and fame is more partial to successful aggression than to patriotic resistance. Like Alexander, he seemed to have been born for universal innovation; in life restlessly active, we see him reforming the coinage and establishing the legal divisions of money; gathering about him the learned of every country, founding schools and collecting libraries, interfering, but with the tone of a king, in religious controversies; aiming though prematurely, at the formation of a naval force; attempting for the sake of commerce the magnificent enterprise of uniting the Rhine and the Danube, and meditating to mould the discordant codes of the Roman and barbarian laws into a uniform system.

*Born for
universal
innovation*

He was a great conqueror and undertook in person fifty-four expeditions. He extended his power from the Eyder on the north to the Ebro, the Mediterranean and Benevento to the south; from the Atlantic on the west to the Drave and Danube on the east. He not only maintained and extended his frontiers but also checked the barbarian invasions; helped the spread of Christianity and defended the Christians from the attacks of the Huns, Saracens, Saxons, and the Slavs. Under him Germany ceased to be a land of disunited wandering tribes. It was by him that the first steps towards the formation of a German nation were taken. By uniting

*Great
conqueror*

the lands of the Italians and the Franks, he profoundly affected the future history of Western Europe.

*Equally great
as an
organiser
and ruler*

Again, he was a great organiser and ruler. The political organisation of his dominions brought all parts in a very close personal touch with him. His 'missi-dominici' system and local representatives kept his authority supreme and unquestioned all over the empire. "Few men have possessed the ruler's genius to the same extent as Charlemagne."

*Inauguration
of the Holy
Roman
Empire*

His inauguration of the Holy Roman Empire produced new ideas of supreme importance both to the empire and the Papacy. It was the direct cause of the theories which played a great part in later history. And although the empire of Charlemagne soon broke up and although feudalism became a serious rival to imperialism, Charlemagne's policy led to the establishment of kingdom which ensured a considerable measure of union and good government and in spite of serious weakness in them they marked a great improvement on the shapeless chaos of the previous times. The ideal of a universal civilised Christian monarchy set up by Charlemagne permeated the subsequent political concept of Europe.

Private life

The great qualities of Charlemagne were not free from the vices of a barbarian and a conqueror. He married nine wives and divorced them one after another with little ceremony. This attests the license of his private life. His temperance and frugality could hardly redeem this barbarous aspect of his private life. "Unsparing of blood, though not constitutionally cruel, and wholly indifferent to the means which his ambition prescribed, he beheaded in one day four thousand Saxons—an act of atrocious butchery." His persecuting Edicts pronouncing the pain of death for those who refused baptism were equally cruel and showed his utter intolerance

of other faiths. His character, therefore, was a mixture of barbarous ferocity and elevated views of national improvement and offers a nice analogy with that of Peter the Great of Russia. The character of Charlemagne had been, indeed, a union of grandeur and roguery, gold and alloy.

But we are apt to overlook the vices which were more or less born of the limitations of the times in which Charlemagne lived. These vices were like the black spots in the surface of the Sun or the Moon which do not come in view due to the brilliance of the other parts. A strong sympathy for intellectual excellence was the leading characteristic of Charlemagne and this undoubtedly biased him in the chief political error of his conduct—that of encouraging the power and pretensions of the hierarchy. Charlemagne was a diligent scholar, a good speaker and a fair poet. He spoke Latin, German and understood Greek. He was interested in music, astronomy, theology and law. But he never learnt to write. He had a great knowledge of grammar and would complain that he received letters from abbots and bishops which were ‘very correct in sentiment and very incorrect in grammar’. Under his patronage learning revived. He ordered schools to be founded in every monastery, caused the manuscripts to be copied, ordered the compilation of Latin and German grammars, biographies, histories, etc. He also caused the collection of Frankish ballads. Under his orders the Text of the Bible was revised and corrected. As a builder, Charlemagne was none the less noteworthy. He built a cathedral at Aachen, palaces at Aachen, Nimewegen, Engleheim and a long bridge at Mainz. He constructed a canal joining the Rhine and the Danube. He introduced the Romanesque style of architecture. But perhaps his greatest eulogy is written in the disgraces of the succeeding generations and the miseries of Europe. “He stands alone like a beacon upon a waste or a

*Vices hidden
behind the
brilliance of
character and
personality*

*A real
builder*

*A beacon on
a rock*

rock in the broad ocean.” His sceptre was the bow of Ulysses which could not have been drawn by any weaker hand. In the dark ages of European history the reign of Charlemagne affords a solitary resting place between two long periods of turbulence and ignominy deriving the advantages of contrast both from that of the preceding dynasty and of posterity for whom he had formed an empire which they were unworthy and unequal to maintain. By the almost universal verdict he has been pronounced to be the most imposing personage that appears between the fall of Rome and the 15th century.

4/ Causes of Dissolution of Charlemagne's Empire :

*Sceptre of
Ulysses
unfit to be
drawn by
weaker hands*

*Lack of
homogeneity*

(1) ‘Like the kingdom of Alexander and that of many another great conqueror, the mighty empire of Charlemagne fell to pieces soon after his death.’ “His sceptre was the bow of Ulysses which could not be drawn by weaker hands.” Charlemagne had indeed acquired a vast empire by his personal ability but the short time that he could devote for its consolidation was insufficient to weld various peoples with differences in race, language, tribe, temperament and custom into a national unity. The population element of his empire, therefore, although lived under the same government and same religion lacked homogeneity and remained incoherent. And no sooner the commanding personality of Charlemagne was removed than these differences began to manifest themselves. When the empire devolved on his successors, the strength to grasp the mighty sceptre did not pass along with it. Charlemagne had made brilliant attempt to reorganise society after the model of the Roman empire but he failed, and his kingdom went to pieces because of the weakness of his successors under whom lands, office and authority were usurped by their officials.

(2) But the empire foundered on many a rock.

On the death of Charlemagne in 814, centrifugal forces within the empire soon got the upperhand. The Carolingian custom of dividing the empire among the sons of the king was a dangerous scheme and it was rendered more so due to the absence of any definite and regular rules of succession. The empire was regarded as a private possession and all the evils of dividing and redividing the empire cropped up once the reigning monarch was dead. Lewis, son of Charlemagne tried in vain to satisfy his three sons—Lothar, Lewis and Charles by dividing and redividing his empire among them, culminating in the Treaty of Verdun (843) which had most destructive effects on the foundations of royal power.

*Centrifugal
forces active*

(3) Charlemagne's empire was not a homogeneous state with any uniform political tradition. The eastern and the western halves of the Frankish lands had fundamental differences relating to geographical conditions, regional variations, etc. The east was undeveloped compared to the west. The Rhine land apart, there was no peace on the eastern frontiers. The western side had developed a political environment of the Roman provincial life. These differences naturally hindered homogeneity within the empire and on Charlemagne's death these became all the more pronounced.

*Lack of
homogeneity*

(4) The disintegration was further hastened by the racial differences that existed within the realm. No people more tenaciously resisted Frankish conquest and incorporation in the Frankish empire than the Saxons. Charlemagne's method of forcing his religion upon all peoples within his empire was not swallowed by all of them and once the external forces of disintegration lent aid to them they began to throw off the yoke of a common emperor.

*Racial
differences*

(5) The internal forces of disintegration was aided by the external attacks by the barbarians.

*External
attacks*

With Charlemagne's death in 814, began a period of almost two centuries of attacks from all sides by heathen Norsemen, heathen Magyars and the infidel Saracens.

Conflict between empire and papacy (6) The growing conflict between the empire and the papacy also contributed to no mean extent to the dissolution of the empire.

Vastness caused weakness (7) The vastness of the empire was itself a weakness. The far-flung territories were ably kept together by an emperor like Charlemagne but in weaker hands the vastness proved its weakness. The Saxons who were never reconciled to the rule of Charlemagne delayed not in showing their fangs.

Lack of vision of Charlemagne (8) Finally, the limitations of Charlemagne's own vision also contributed to the debacle. In spite of his realisation of the advantages of single rule over the empire, which for about a hundred years had shown themselves, Charlemagne did not conceive of any better settlement of his empire than the old disastrous custom of division among the sons. He should have learnt the lessons of the history of the past hundred years and altered the rules of succession so that a better and firmer empire might be bequeathed by him to his successors.

CHAPTER 5

Charlemagne's Successors : The Partition of Verdun

THE CAROLINGIAN EMPIRE went the same way as did the Roman empire in the fifth century, the fatal results of which were seen in the complete overthrow of the civilised life. The weak successors of Charlemagne were not only incapable of commanding obedience of the nobility but also unable to repel the invaders.

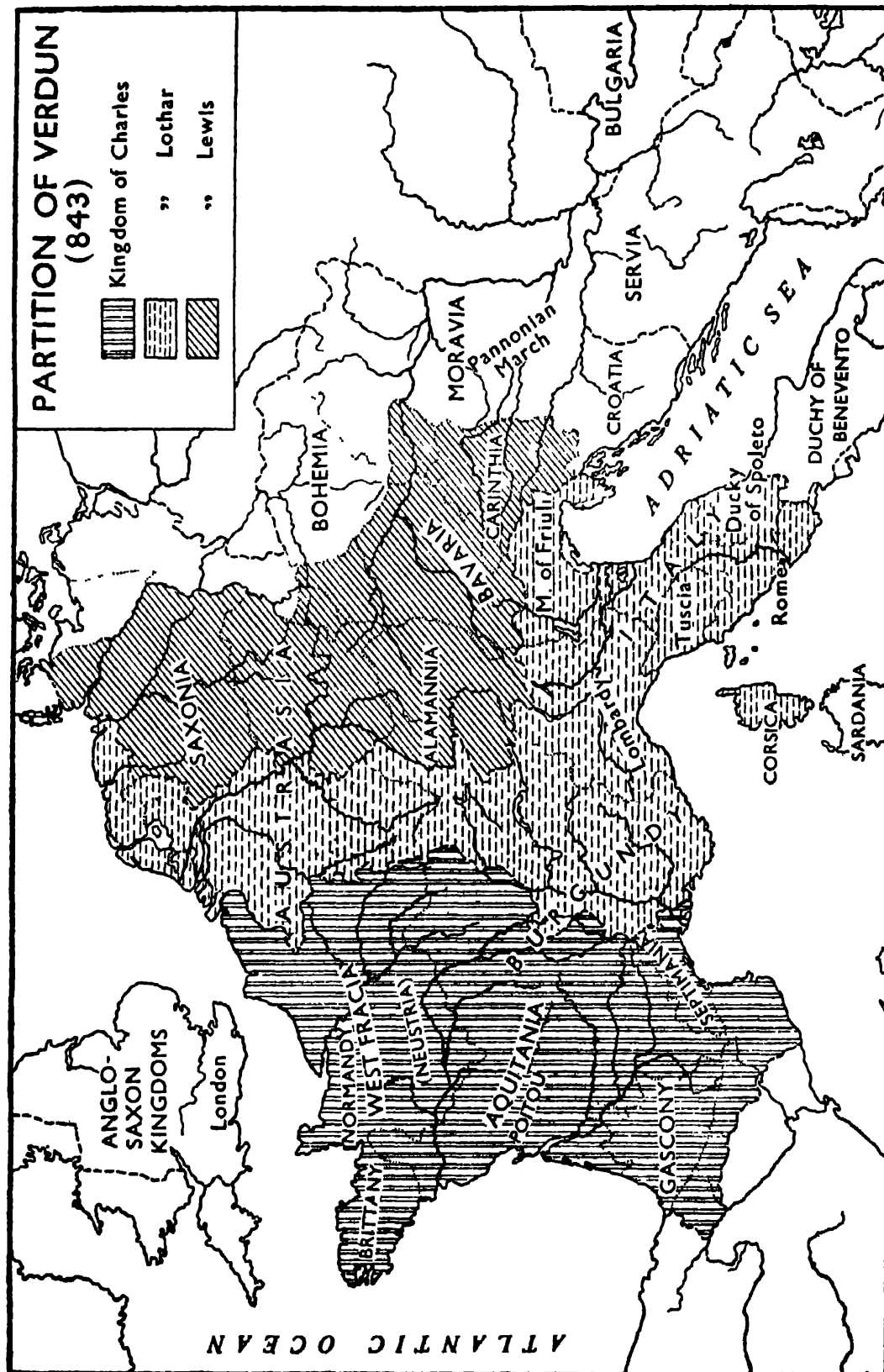
*Break-up
of the
Carolingian
empire*

1/ Lewis the Pious (814-40) : In 814 Charlemagne left his throne to his only surviving son Lewis, surnamed 'The Pious' who was a weak, good-natured man thoroughly unsuited to bear imperial responsibility and whose place should have been a monastery rather than a palace. Both by his virtues and his faults he paved the way for the decay of the Empire. He was a doting husband, a loving father and a genuinely religious man. But what was bad of him was his lack of self-respect and determination and his fond subservience to his wife and the clergy.

*Unsuited to
bear imperial
responsibility*

His keen sense of virtue made him intolerant of the lasciviousness of his father's court and the immoralities of his father himself. Soon after his accession, therefore, he cleansed his court at Aachen of its disreputable elements but retained able ministers devoted to the imperial system. In his act of cleansing the court, he did not spare his own sisters whose life was nothing less than scandalous during his father's later years. Chancellor Helisachar was relegated to his monastery. Count Wala was stripped of his official insignia and sent to the cloister of Corbey. Abbot Adalhard was compelled to dwell in the lonely monastery in an island by the Loire mouth.

*Deep sense
of virtue*



. Lewis' chief interest was to reform and protect the Church which according to him was essential for religion and civilised government. Under him things ecclesiastical took precedence over all others. Bishops and abbots who shocked the pious by riding with cloak, sword and golden spurs just like the secular nobles were legally debarred from doing so. Clerics of servile birth were put on par with the high-born clerics by providing that a serf could buy his freedom and be equal with his former lord. This was the way by which he saved his favourite and several others of his counsellors from the insults and invectives of high-born clergy. By a legislation Lewis made fourteen monastic houses owe both military and civil responsibilities to the empire and sixteen others to pay money to the state, and all others to only pray for the welfare of the Emperor and the children of the empire. This had the effect of throwing more lands free from duty to the state.

*Interest in
the Church*

*Reforms of
the Church*

Although eager to promote ecclesiastical interests Lewis would not surrender his imperial rights. He compelled Leo III to apologize for the unauthorised execution of conspirators. Pascal was made to exculpate himself from the death of two officials overloyal to the Frankish supremacy. Imperial leave had to be taken for executing Roman notables who were under the protection of the Emperor. But the papacy scored a victory over Lewis. The successive Popes, although loyal to the Emperor, were growing restive to become autonomous. On the death of Leo III, Stephen IV was elected to the papal chair in great haste and was consecrated without the imperial sanction. Lewis did not object to this, on the contrary agreed to the proposal of the new pope that he should crown the emperor. Lewis received Stephen at Rheims in great state and allowed himself to be crowned for the second time. "Thus he loosened his own grasp on the Papacy at one moment, and allowed the Pope to tighten his

*His ecclesiastical
policy*

*Partition of
Aachen*

grasp on the empire at the next." In the year following (817) he fell down from the wooden gallery that connected the palace at Aachen and the cathedral when it gave way. Lewis received injuries which kept him confined to bed for several weeks. But the net result of this accident was a morbidity that took him over which increased and did never leave him till his death. An exaggerated asceticism characterised his manner of life and it was with difficulty that he was persuaded not to lay down the crown for retiring to a monastery. But he now decided to make a settlement of the inheritance of his wide dominions. He took his inexperienced son of seventeen into partnership with himself so that on his death the succession might be well assured and at the same time he determined to give his younger sons appanages within the realm of his eldest son. By the *Partition of Aachen* Lothar, his eldest son was made the co-Emperor and during his father's life was given the Kingdom of Italy. Pipin, the second son was given Aquitaine, Lewis, the third son was assigned Bavaria and the wild marches to the east along the Danube. It was supposed by Lewis the Pious that on his death his eldest son would inherit both the capitals Aachen and Rome and the largest share of the vast imperial dominion, and his brothers would possess only Aquitaine and Bavaria which would automatically keep them weak and therefore subservient to their brother. In placing Italy under Lothar, Lewis disregarded the claims of his nephew Bernard who was placed in Italy by Charlemagne in 810. Moreover, his rule was particularly popular. As soon as the news of the signing of the *Partition of Aachen* was known, Bernard flew into rebellion and he received the spontaneous support of the Lombards and attempts were made to incite the Gauls as well.

But the rebellion was easily quelled and Bernard blinded. The blinding of Bernard's eyes was done

so clumsily that he died of the shock (818). The death amid the general disapproval, had left Lewis remorseful and disconsolate, and the death of his wife, which soon followed, was taken by him as nothing less than divine displeasure. He was on the point of abdicating his throne which, however, was prevented by his advisers who succeeded in inducing him to marry. He chose Judith the daughter of Welf, the Count of Swabia as his wife (819). The new wedlock brought him a child who was named Charles, later surnamed 'The Bald', and that was the beginning of an unending chain of sufferings both for himself and his empire. Lewis' lack of control over the affairs of the state, his earlier public penance admitting his guilt in causing Bernard's death and his doting over the new-born Charles—all combined to the bursting of the storm in 829. In that year Lewis allotted a share of his empire to Charles from Swabia. In the court new advisers took control of affairs. Lothar ceased to be co-regent and was sent to Italy where his wounded pride had the fanning from the dismissed officers and all those were against the Emperor's new advisers. Pipin and Lewis the German, the two others sons of Lewis also felt insecure in the lack of stability of their father's decisions. For a time they deserted their father, yet they saw wisdom in retaining their father as Emperor rather than in placing their brother Lothar on the imperial throne. In the reaction that soon began Lothar found his cause lost and was content to remain king of Italy. The three other brothers, Pipin, Lewis the German, and Charles were to share the rest of the empire. This, however, was not the end of the trouble. Pipin and Lewis revolted against their father. Lothar who first joined his father, deserted him and sided with his brothers and it was he who persuaded the Pope Gregory IV to join them, who readily did so with the hope of negotiating a peace between the father and the sons in order to magnify the power of the

*Struggle over
succession*

*Imprisonment
of Lewis*

papacy. After prolonged negotiations Lewis agreed to meet the Pope and his sons at Alsace where on his arrival he was deserted by his men and himself was taken prisoner by Lothar (833). It was at Alsace that Pope Gregory claimed supremacy over the soul while the emperor was supreme over the body, that is the spiritual sovereignty belonged to the Pope and material sovereignty to the emperor. Herein lay the repudiation of Charlemagne's theory that the Holy Roman Emperor was both the spiritual and material sovereign and, therefore, superior to the Pope.

*Restoration
of Lewis*

Lewis the Pious was forced to abdicate and even to do penance for his misgovernment. But the harsh treatment meted out to him by his faithless son Lothar made even the most determined enemies of Lewis to relent. The reaction led to Lewis' restoration (834), although without power and as a tool in the hands of the contending factions. From 834 till his death in 840 he ruled no doubt, but disorder had in the meantime become endemic. The Vikings were ravaging the coasts and Lewis was planning for fresh division of his empire. Pipin died in 838 and his son Pipin II, that is Lewis' grandson, was disinherited and division of the territories was done to benefit the latest born Charles. This led to first rebellion and when Lewis died in 840, his sons flew to arms.

*Last of the
Carolingian
to keep feeble
link of the
empire*

Lewis the Pious was the last of the Carolingians who had held, however feebly, the link that had kept the Empire together. After his death it was the story of the break-up of the Empire under his successors.

Lothar

Lothar who succeeded to his father's throne still made a desperate bid to keep the Empire together, with the help of the Church. But his depleted strength due to Lewis the German and Charles' success in gaining over the Eastern and the Western parts of the Empire to their cause through grants of benefices and honours prevented him from doing so.

Lewis and Charles joined hands to the fulfilment of their common ends and met Lothar on the field of Fontenay (June 25, 841) and won victory over him. This was the first of the dynastic quarrels of modern Europe fought out on the field of Fontenay. Lothar wanted to fight still which made the two brothers Lewis the German and Charles to strengthen their alliance by meeting at Strasbourg in 842, where the famous *Strasbourg Oath* was taken in two vernaculars of the Eastern and Western parts of the Empire. Lewis' vassals swore in German while Charles' vassals swore in French. 'This was a presage of the future', the birth of the French and German nations of the future.

*Strasbourg
Oath*

Lothar and his two brothers soon realised that they would not be able to conquer the opposite party and the only course open was a rapprochement. Both sides came to terms in August 843 and signed the treaty of Verdun.

*Signing of
the Treaty of
Verdun (843)*

2/ Treaty of Verdun, 843 : According to the terms of the treaty of Verdun Charlemagne's Empire was partitioned among the three surviving sons of Lewis the Pious. Lothar was allowed to retain the imperial title as also superiority over Rome. This was a precedence reserved to Lothar, which he, as the eldest son, had already been enjoying. But all the three brothers were practically sovereign in their respective territories. The Empire was divided into three kingdoms of fairly equal size with their boundaries drawn. To Charles the Bald was given *Francia Occidentalis*, that is, Neustria and Aquitaine; to Lothar the Emperor, who must possess the two capitals of Rome and Aachen, was given a long and narrow kingdom stretching from the North sea to the Mediterranean including northern half of Italy; to Lewis the German was given all east of the Rhine—Franks, Saxons, Bavaria, Austria, Carinthia with possible supremacies over Czechs in far off Bohemia

Terms

and Moravia. Needless to comment that Lothar was left with a barren imperial title and an imposing kingdom but in reality he had the worst of the shares.

*Importance of
the partition
treaty*

The partition of Verdun (843) was important for more than one reason. It finally broke up the Carolingian Empire. It was the first formal step in the dissolution of Charles' empire. The treaty had just destroyed 'the most fragile part of Charlemagne's work—territorial unity; the very spirit of his government was thereupon to disappear'. Though Lewis the German and Charles the Bald had restored to Lothar his capitals of Aachen and Rome and consented to respect him as elder brother, yet for all practical intents and purposes they became sovereigns with full equality of status with Lothar.

*Rival
interests of
France,
Germany
and Italy*

The treaty created France, Germany and Italy, rival kingdoms, born of fratricidal struggles, which were doomed to be eternally separated by warring interests.

*Separation
of Gallic and
German
nationalities*

A more important result of the partition treaty of Verdun was the separation of the Gallic and German nationalities which marked the beginning, however feebly, of the German and the French nationalities. The Teutonic intolerance of Gallo-Franks and the Church, found satisfaction in this separation. It is usual to regard the Treaty of Verdun as reflecting the emergence of great monarchies of mediaeval and modern Europe and reflecting the dawning of the national sentiments and aspirations consequent upon the division of the Carolingian empire.

*Destructive
effects on the
foundations of
royal power*

It has been remarked by Barraclough that the importance of the Treaty of Verdun lay primarily in its destructive effects on the foundations of the royal power. The Treaty of Verdun affected the foundations of the royal power, namely, the *royal estates, personal obligations of the royal vassals to the crown, and the church*. No less important were the

effects on the higher clergy and the outstanding lay families. The higher clergy and the outstanding lay families which served Charles the Great, supported the policy of a united empire. It is not true, as Barraclough maintains, that the absence of a strong hand at the top led to feudal anarchy. As a matter of fact, the bulk of the aristocracy stood by the legitimate claimant. But as there was no constitutional machinery to decide such issues, appeal to arms had to be made in which aristocrats took sides.

It has been observed that 'modern France and Germany owe their beginning to the division of 843.' Modern Germany proclaims the era of 843 A.D., the beginning of her national existence. In fact, Germany celebrated her thousandth anniversary in 1843 A.D. But it has to be specially emphasised that antagonism of nationalities was a consequence of the Treaty of Verdun and not, as has been supposed by some, the treaty a consequence of the antagonism of nationalities. 'By establishing between countries purely German and countries purely French an intermediate state, made up of territories in which the two languages and peoples were mixed, France and Germany were forcibly awakened to a consciousness of themselves. The division was not the result of any consciousness of nationalities, despite the fact that the *Strasbourg Oath* was taken both in French and German languages, but was a matter of dynastic convenience. "It was all but accident that the division by assigning Romance lands to Earls and German lands to Lewis provided a natural framework within which the French and the German nations could acquire their identities and grow." It was by convenience and not by consciousness that the divisions the partition had effected, roughly corresponded to national unities. Nevertheless, the Treaty of Verdun 'marks the beginning of what the map of Europe was to become. The West-Frankish

*National
antagonism*

kingdom was the beginning of France, the East-Frankish kingdom of Germany.' Lothar's kingdom having a mixed population and having no national basis was the weakest of the three and soon broke up into Italy, Burgundy and Lotharingia with separate sovereignties.

*Come-back
by the Papacy*

Another consequence that remained rather obscure, was the come-back staged by the Papacy through the peace-maker's role in the Treaty of Verdun. So the Papacy remained and with this added status, the sovereignty exercised by Charlemagne over the Church was dimmed. What began with Pope Gregory IV ended with Pope Gregory VII.

*End of
fratricidal
struggle—no
substitute
emerged*

The partition of the Empire although ended the fratricidal struggle did not give rest to the three brothers, yet there was nothing durable to take its place. The Vikings were attacking the coasts of all the three kingdoms. Lewis the German had to fight the Slavs, Charles to fight his nephew Pipin II and oust him from Aquitaine and unavailingly try to put down his unruly magnates. Lothar who divided his kingdom among his three sons was perhaps the most uncomfortable of all.

*Passing of
imperial
sceptre from
one branch
to the other*

Of the tangled political history of the fifty-five years that followed the Treaty of Verdun, the only point worth noting was the passing of the imperial sceptre from one branch of the Carolingian line to another. After Lewis II and Charles the Bald the sceptre passed into the hands of Charles the Fat who united all the dominions of his great-grandfather. But it was not within his power to strengthen or defend or give life to the expiring monarchy. In 887 A.D. he was driven out of Italy and his death in the following year (888) is usually taken as the date of the extinction of the Carolingian Empire in the West.

The Carolingian Empire rapidly broke up into small kingdoms numbering seven. Charles the Fat's

nephew Arnulf who deposed him, received as his reward the kingdom of the East Franks, the West-Frankish noble elected Odo, count of Paris their king, Duke of Aquitaine took Charles the Simple to his court and made himself independent of Odo. Burgundy was divided into two independent kingdoms, Boso, Count of Vienna making himself king of lower Burgundy and Count Rudolf of upper Burgundy. Likewise, Lombardy was divided into two independent kingdoms, Berengar, margrave of Friuli was elected king of the Lombards, but Guido of Spoleto made war on him and occupied western part of Lombardy and assumed the title of king. Thus there arose two kingdoms in Lombardy.

*Break-up of
the Carolin-
gian empire*

CHAPTER 6

Carolingian Renaissance

*A limited
Renaissance*

THE CAROLINGIAN RENAISSANCE was a revival of learning, in a limited sense compared to the Italian Renaissance of the sixteenth century. The period following the calamitous fifth century was one of ignorance and appalling degradation of culture. Not only the study of classics, but the ability to read and write was threatened. Spoken Latin drifted from literary Latin so far that a knowledge of the former was a hindrance rather than a help in understanding formal composition. No one dreamed of writing in crude vernacular, although such polished languages as French, Provencal, Italian and Spanish were eventually to develop from it. Official documents prove the contemporary ignorance of the simple rules of grammar and the grotesque scrawl into which best handwriting had degenerated. Preservation of ancient learning under the circumstances, depended upon the ecclesiastics. Scholarly pursuits of Ambrose, Jerome, Augustine and Gregory illustrated this. But their intellectual pursuits, though certainly profound, subordinated the rational faculties and were consecrated to pious ends. A passionate delight in learning or literature for its own sake was sinful. Many monks, the Irish monks in particular, who would act as priests among the people had special need of education and they came to have a deep regard for classics, both Greek and Latin, which they copied and re-copied. Yet their conscious purpose was solely the promotion of true faith. But vast majority of the monks continued to be ignorant and worldly, spending their lives in secular pursuits like feuds, political intrigues, warfare, hunting, etc. It is no wonder, therefore, that the seventh and the eighth centuries* were a singularly

unproductive age in literature and learning. Authors worth mentioning in the history of the European thought were exceedingly few, and such as there were had a mental outlook which seems to us childlike. If such were the great teachers, what would be the calibre of their pupils ?

*Seventh and
Eighth
centuries
unproductive
in literature*

It was to improve such conditions that Charlemagne came to devote much of his attention. The nucleus of the famous palace school of Charlemagne was a number of teachers his father Pipin had already attached to the imperial court. It was this palace school of Charlemagne to which Alcuin of Northumbria was invited to preside over, which was the centre of the revival under Charlemagne otherwise called *Carolingian Renaissance*.

*Charle-
magne's
palace school*

On the evidence of Einhard we know that Charlemagne was a zealous learner of the liberal arts and conferred great honours upon those who taught these and held them in high esteem. Charlemagne took lessons in grammar from Peter of Pisa, and in other branches of learning from Alcuin. But what was more noteworthy about him was that he devoted more careful attention to the improvement of the intellectual life of his empire than to his own education. "The result was a revival of interest in education and scholarship, literature and philosophy so notable as to be called the Carolingian Renaissance." The palace school which was the nucleus of the intellectual revival under Charlemagne was attended not only by Charlemagne himself but by the children of the imperial officials and the nobility, and also by any promising children brought to Charlemagne.

*Charle-
magne's
teachers*

The most remarkable figure in the Carolingian Renaissance was Alcuin. His text-book in the form of dialogues on grammar, spelling, rhetoric, and dialectics were the standard of the time. Paul the Deacon, whom Charlemagne brought from

Alcuin

Peter, Einhard, Theodulf, Paulinus and Angilbert Lombardy was the historian of the time, and his History of the Lombards is of considerable importance. Likewise, grammarian Peter of Pisa, biographer Einhard, poet Theodulf, the Visigothic exile from Spain, Patriarch Paulinus and Abbot Angilbert enriched the period by their works.

Return to good texts Return to good texts was another noteworthy aspect of the Carolingian Renaissance. Jerome's Vulgate which had suffered many and various corruptions in Ireland, England, Italy and Spain was restored to the purity of the original text. The liturgy of the Gallic Church which had deviated from the correct Roman practice was restored to its original form. An authoritative copy of Benedictine rule was obtained from Monte Cassino. A collection of homilies was made by Paul the Deacon under orders from Charlemagne for the use of the priest who could not prepare their own sermons. In the *scriptoria* of the monasteries reform of handwriting was going on, and the Carolingian *minuscule* which was a small neat script soon replaced all others.

Charlemagne's patronage of palace school and monasteries Under Charlemagne's patronage not only the palace school developed, but schooling was available in monasteries and cathedrals. Bishops and abbots trained under Alcuin became patrons of learning and arranged for its dissemination. In a letter addressed to the abbot of Fulda, Charlemagne wrote: "we exhort you not only not to neglect the study of letters but even to vie in learning, so that you may prevail more easily and rightly in penetrating the mysteries of sacred literature." Although after Charlemagne's death the schools suffered both from the lack of patronage and confusion of the time, yet the renaissance started under him was carried on. Large manuscript libraries were built up in monasteries, and the manuscripts of Tacitus, Suetonius, Columella, Marcellinus, etc., were preserved in the monastery library of Fulda. St. Gall,

Reichenau, Monte Cassino had also vast collections in their libraries. The excellent work of collection of important manuscripts of classical writers, numbering hundreds, that was done during the Carolingian Renaissance gave the posterity to turn to them for good texts. Copying of manuscripts was particularly the work of the monastic *scriptoria* which helped dissemination of ancient literature and learning. Abbot Lupus who lived after Charlemagne, was one of the most learned men of the Carolingian Renaissance period and was the best writer of Latin since Venerable Bede. He undertook extensive tours in order to collect important manuscripts. Carolingian scholarship found expression in the extensive commentaries and glossaries on the Scripture, often in bilingual form—Latin and vernacular. Rabanus Maurus, wrote *De Rerum Naturis*, an encyclopaedia, Einhard wrote the invaluable *Biography of Charlemagne*, Paul the Deacon wrote his *History of the Lombards*, Nithard a lay man for the first time wrote history during the Middle Ages, and filled the storehouse of knowledge of the period.

*Venerable
Bede*

*Rabanus
Maurus,
Einhard,
Paul,
Nithard*

Carolingian Renaissance did not leave religion out of its purview, and in this regard anticipated the nature of the sixteenth century renaissance. Gottschalk, in the middle of the ninth century, made an intensive study of the *theory of predestination*, that is, men were elected by God neither to be saved or damned and men could not alter the situation by penance or otherwise, and restored it to its rigorous purity. Nobody before him ventured to question the modification made of the doctrine and confirmed by Pope Gregory the Great. The result was that like many after him, Gottschalk was put to open shame and confined in a monastery. Two monks, Ratbertus and Ratrammus questioned the *doctrine of transubstantiation*, that is after the Mass, the bread and wine were transformed into the flesh

Gottschalk

*Pope
Gregory*

*Ratbertus &
Ratrammus*

and blood of Christ. Although the dispute had no immediate effect, it was this very question that had wrecked the Catholic Church in the sixteenth century.

*Scotus
Erigena*

John Scot or Scotus Erigena, a friend of Charles the Bald, grandson of Charlemagne, was an Irishman who came over to the continent and maintained a lively intellectual circle in the Carolingian Court. He was a vastly learned man and had great command over Greek and knew much of Plato and Aristotle. He also translated Dionysius' Greek philosophical tracts into Latin. Scotus Erigena was a truly original thinker but his system of Philosophy was vastly influenced by *Neo-Platonic* mysticism. He was perhaps the most original thinker of the age, for while recognising the authority of the Scriptures he insisted upon the equal validity of reason. According to him "Authority sometimes proceeds from reason, but reason never from authority. For all authority which is not approved by true reason seems weak. But true reason, since it is established in its own strength, needs to be strengthened by the assent of no authority." Thus reason or rationalism which supplied the motive force behind all renaissance, developed to a considerable extent during the Carolingian period.

*Neo-
platonism*

*Carolingian
poetry*

Carolingian poetry also needs special mention. Four volumes of Latin poetry have survived and these poems for most part are based on the verses of Virgil and Ovid. Theodulf, Rabanus Maurus, Walafrid Strabo, Sedulius Scotus wrote good verses. Sedulius Scotus also wrote a good book on government.

*Growth of
Vernacular*

Vernacular was not neglected during the Carolingian period and we know on the evidence of Einhard that Charlemagne got all the rude old songs written so that these might be transmitted to the posterity. But unfortunately the vernacular written

in the form of German heroic poetry has not survived except a few fragments, most noteworthy of which are *Lay Hildebrand*, an episode in the struggle between Odovacar and Theodoric, and *Savior* dealing with a Biblical subject. For the convenience of conversion, prayer, and confession, translation into German dialects were done in the monasteries of Fulda, Reichenau, St. Gall, etc.

Thus it may be claimed that the Carolingian Renaissance was in a very true and complete sense a renaissance and the renascent spirit touched religion, literature, philosophy, learning, in fact, every aspect of the intellectual life.

*A renaissance
in true and
complete
sense*

CHAPTER 7

The Northmen or Norsemen : Magyars : Moslems

*Invasions of
the Frankish
empire*

THE INVASIONS to which the Frankish Empire was exposed on all sides by the Northmen or Norsemen, Magyars and the seafaring Moslems, were a chief factor in its decay. The most important of these invasions was from the north whence a new massive Germanic migration had started. These invaders are known as Northmen, Norsemen or Vikings.

*Establishment
of the
kingdoms of
Denmark,
Norway and
Sweden*

1/ The Northmen, Norsemen or Vikings :
The German tribes of Denmark, Norway, and Sweden were almost entirely free from the Roman influence and Christianity. They lived in independent groups without any central government, but during the ninth century many of the tribes were united under some leaders who arose. Three kingdoms were established, namely, the kingdoms of Denmark, Norway and Sweden. The nobles and other lesser leaders who were too proud to submit to the rule of the kings turned to the sea, hoping to preserve their independence. They began as pirates and plundered towns and monasteries on the coasts of Gaul, Germany, Spain and even Italy. Gradually they began to spend winter in the countries they went to plunder and such settlements eventually became permanent. They were soon joined by their countrymen who wanted to share their prosperity. The Scandinavian freebooters were given the term *Viking* which meant those who haunted a bay or creek (*vik*).

*Northmen did
not lose their
individuality*

The Northmen possessed a marked degree of adaptibility which was a German characteristic. "In France they became Frenchmen, in England,

Englishmen and in Russia, Russians.' They did not lose their individuality, self-confidence, courage and a thirst for fame and praise. Their genius for governing, their bodily vigour, their love of cruelty and ferocious warfare, their deceit and cunning were never lost. Hardy, bold and restless the pagan Vikings excelled as seafarers, traders and warriors. Their love of fighting was equalled by their love of gain. Their gods, Odin the Wily, Thor the Rough, reflected their own character.

Yet with all their barbarism the Scandinavians possessed a progressing civilisation and culture and had a subtle grasp of law and were skilful manipulators in disputes. They were good learners and were ready to seize on new ideas and adopt the higher organisation of the society of the country wherein they settled. With their long narrow ships, remarkably designed for speed and seaworthiness, they were capable of most adventurous voyages. Like the Goths and the Vandals they left their religion when they left their original home and in the countries where they settled adopted Christianity with a heartiness that soon made them champions of Christianity. They rebuilt churches and monasteries many of which they themselves had plundered and destroyed and developed a great regard for holy places, and from pirates became Christian knights.

*Adaptability
of the Scan-
dinavians*

The Viking expeditions, primarily along the coasts of the British isles, Ireland, the Netherlands, France, Spain, and North Africa, extended as far as the shores of Greenland and America, and eastward to the lands of the Baltic, Finnis and Slavic peoples. In absence of defences against sea-borne invasions anywhere in those days, the Vikings easily swept forward without difficulty. They sailed into the interior of each region through rivers. They crossed Poland and Russia via the Vistula, Dnieper, Dwina and Volga and reached the Black and the

*Viking
expeditions*

Caspian seas; and reached Burgundy by crossing the Seine and Meuse. They pillaged and plundered everything before them and eventually were tamed and absorbed by the civilisations of the countries wherein they settled permanently. After their conversion to Christianity they became amalgamated with the native peoples. In this way they settled in Normandy by 911, in England by 870 and in Russia by 862. Under the leadership of Rurik and his comrades, they founded the first Russian state.

*Impact of
Viking
invasions*

The impact of the Northmen or Viking invasions and settlement in different parts of Europe was as varied as it was important. Wherever the Vikings settled, they changed the political institutions of the country. In France their presence strengthened the tendencies towards feudal decentralisation. The king's authority was weakened and the nobles saw a chance of challenging royal prerogatives. Seeking wider autonomy the nobles did not hesitate to engage the support of the Vikings. To counter this move, the kings vainly tried to buy the service of the nobles with the gift of royal lands and then playing them against others. The parcelling out of the royal land served all the more to diminish the strength of the central authority. Decentralisation that took place in this way further accentuated the differences between northern and southern France in language, law and tradition. Trade and commerce declined, life became insecure and living standard very low.

*More pro-
nounced in
England and
France*

The effect of the Viking invasions proved even more disruptive in England than in France. Although the Vikings under Danish leadership were converted into Christianity at the instance of Alfred and subsequently the Danelaw was conquered by the Anglo-Saxon kings still this did not bring stable government. Shortly after 1000 A.D. the Danes strengthened by reinforcements received from their

homeland regained the initiative and their struggle for power was resumed.

In the eastern and central eastern Europe the Northmen shattered the old regimes and thus compelled the emergence of new political systems. In the second half of the ninth century the Northmen under Rurik arrived at Novogorod and established their political sway along the trade route connecting the Baltic and Black Seas and thus a Russian state, properly speaking came into being. Towards the last quarter of the tenth century the Northmen under their ruler Vladimir I accepted Christianity and his subjects followed suit. As in the case of Russia the states of Poland, Hungary, etc., also achieved their statchood under the Northmen. But the German Empire remained untouched by the Norse invasions and while the East and West of Europe were being transformed by Norse invasions, in Germany and Italy two main forces of the Middle Ages were evolving, namely, the Empire and the Papacy.

*Compelled
emergence
of new
political
systems*

2/ The Magyars : The Magyars, called Hungarians, in the West by their marauding and migrating expeditions devastated Lombardy in 899, the first country to suffer severely at their hands. King Berengar of Lombardy was completely defeated and after a year's free looting and plundering of his country, the Magyars realised a heavy ransom from him before leaving. They renewed their invasions several times and at least once at the invitation of Berengar himself against a rival. It was not before 955 when the Magyars were defeated at the hands of Otto the Great at the battle of Lechfield that Italy was delivered of the great scourge. Germany suffered at their hands even more. Since 900 A.D. Magyar invasion became an annual affair and all provinces of Germany were invaded by them in turn. The Magyars invaded Saxony in 924 and its chief was captured. Duke Henry of Saxony (he was

*King
Berengar*

*Annual
Magyar
invasion*

*Battle of
Lechfield*

elected King of Germany in 919) entered into a treaty with the Magyars whose captured chief agreed by this treaty to leave Germany alone for ten years in return for an annual tribute. But after nine years when the tribute money was refused, they reappeared in 933 but were routed by Henry. There were renewals of invasions but the Magyars were routed more than once. In the next year when they invaded Bavaria in full force, the German nobles united under Otto the Great and defeated the pest finally and decisively in the battle of Lechfield, already referred to above.

*Effects of
Magyar
invasions*

The effect of the Magyar invasions was the addition of one powerful nation to Europe which, however, did not add any creative factor to the West. Their devastations produced their most important effect in separating the south-western Slavs from their kinsmen in the Balkans, thereby widening the cleft between the Eastern and Western Europe. Another very important effect of the Magyar invasions was the strengthening of the new German kingship, as was evidenced in the united support the nobles gave to Otto the Great in the battle of Lechfield in 955.

*Moslem
pirates from
Spain carried
on depreda-
tions**Conquest of
Crete, Sicily,
Palermo,
Taranto and
Bari by
Moslem
pirates*

3/ The Moslems : The Moslem invaders of the sea coasts of Western Christendom carried on incursions of terrible severity. Early in the ninth century the Moslem pirates from Spain which was then under the Moslems, seized on Crete. The Aghlabid Amirs of Africa began conquering Sicily. The Moslem pirates practically compelled the closure of the intercourse between the Eastern Empire and Italy. There was no effective check of the Moslem pirates who swooped upon the coasts of southern Italy, for the south Italian dynasties turned their attention from the sea to the shore. In 831 Palermo fell into the hands of the Moslem pirates and it became a magnificent harbour for their attack

upon the mainland. The Italian dukes also occasionally requisitioned their help in their wars against their rivals. This while gave them better idea of the inland countries, earned the moral support of their employers in their depredating incursions. Taranto and Bari were occupied by them. Their attempt on Naples, however, failed. Mutual quarrel of the Italian localities, such as between Lombardy and Campania, made the Moslem invaders' job easier, and for years the Lombardians and Campanians could not prevent their ravages. Under Emperor Lewis II Italy ably resisted the Moslem menace, but on his death in 875 princes and the Pope began to look for a new defender. The shadow emperors and the princes in north Italy did nothing to save Italy from the Moslem piratical invasions from Spain. The Byzantine Emperor Basil I, however, succeeded in occupying Taranto and Bari from the Moslems but failed to take Sicily. Naples and Benevento took the help of the marauders in their struggle with Campania and in 881 the Moslems destroyed the famous abbeys of Monte Cassino and Volturno. Situation in Italy became all the more desperate because of the wars between the local dynasties and against the advancing Byzantine. The tenth century opened with greater terror for Italy Ibrahim of Aghlabid dynasty wrested Taormina from the Byzantines and invaded Capua. But fortunately, for the Italians, he died soon after and the civil war that ensued in Sicily on his death gave a breathing space to the Italians. It was with the Byzantine help that warrior Pope John and Marquess Alberic of Spoleto defeated and annihilated the Moslems at Garigliano. This victory put an end to the worst period of the Moslem piratical incursions, although coastal raids were yet to continue. The lull was broken under the Fatimide Caliphs. Caliph Mahdi conquered Sicily in 917, in 935 an African fleet stormed Genoa as well as Byzantine territories. During 950-52, African troops

*No western
emperor after
Lewis II
a match for
the Moslem
pirates*

*East Roman
emperor
Basil's
partial
success
against the
Moslem
pirates*

*Ibrahim's
invasion of
Italy:
his death*

*Moslem
defeat at
Garigliano*

*Caliph
Mahdi's
renewal of
conquests*

overran Calabria and besieged Naples. The monotony of ravages and blackmail was over with the reconquest of Crete by Nicephorus Phocas but counterbalanced by a disastrous invasion for the reconquest of Sicily (963).

*Moslem
depredations
on both sides
of Alps*

The Moslem pirates of Fraxinetum, in the meantime, were carrying on depredations on both sides of the Alps. Caravans in the Alpine passes were plundered by them. Attempts by Hugh of Provence, King of Italy and Byzantine fleet failed to make any impression upon them. It was under Otto the Great that there was the deliverance from this terrible scourge. In 972 a large number of Moslems were extirpated and the passes were made free for the travellers and the Moslem colonies were occupied. In the meantime in 969, the Fatimide Caliphs conquered Egypt and began hostilities with Byzantine empire, and Moslem raids of Italy went on as before only to be bought off by the princes. Attempt of Otto II to free south Italy of the infidels met with no success, instead he met with a defeat at the hands of Abul Qasim, Amir of Sicily. Rescue ultimately came from the growing sea power of the Italian cities. A Venetian fleet saved Bari from an attempted capture by the Moslems in 1002, in 1005, a fleet from Pisa won a battle with the Moslems in the straits of Messina. With the defeat of Mujahid, king of Denia in 1016 there was a final turning of the tide.

*Otto the
Great's
success in
freeing the
passes of the
Alps from
the Moslems*

*Defeat of
Mujahid—
final turning
of the tide of
Moslem
invasions*

*Impact of
Moslem
incursions*

The impact of the Moslem incursions on the Italian mainland and coasts stimulated the growth of local powers. Except in Sicily, the Saracens made no tangible contribution to the European civilisation. In Sicily, despite their ferocity, they 'transplanted the Arabic culture of Islam as it has formed in the courts of the Caliphs, and left a deep imprint on the island and its people.'

CHAPTER 8

Feudalism

1/ What is Feudalism ? IT IS DIFFICULT to define 'Feudalism' in a precise manner for the enormous complexities the term indicated. But a near approach to a more or less good definition may be made by calling it a system of economic, political and social relationship that subsisted in Europe between the ninth or tenth and the thirteenth centuries.

*Difficulty in
defining
feudalism*

Myers defines 'Feudalism' as 'a special form of society and government, based upon a peculiar tenure of land which prevailed in Europe during the latter part of the Middle Ages, attaining, however, its most perfect development in the eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth centuries.' Indeed it was typically 'a medieval system of government whose chief characteristic was the exercise by large landowners of sovereign rights formerly exercised by the monarch; the inseparable association, in other words, of landownership with powers of government.'

*Myer's
definition*

To sum up, Feudalism as a whole was a 'combination of private government, a particular system of land-holding, and a personal dependence—the last two also entailing a military system.'

*A combina-
tion of
private govt.,
land holding,
personal
allegiance and
military
service*

2/ Essential Features of Feudalism: The most characteristic feature of Feudalism was the private, personal government by the local landowners who had assumed sovereign rights in their areas after the break-up of Charlemagne's Empire. Even weak kings unable to set up or control an efficient government during the period of general dislocation that followed the break-up of the Empire entrusted political rights to private individuals who were able to exercise them. The situation was that each petty

*Break up of
the empire
gave rise to
the charac-
teristic*

*features of
feudalism*

lord though theoretically subject to an overlord and ultimately to the king, was master^r over his own acres, with the result that for all practical purposes Europe was made up of thousands of loosely associated little lordships.

*A peculiar
system of
land tenure*

Second characteristic of Feudalism was the system of land tenure on which the entire system was based. The socio-economic status of an individual would go with the particular piece and size of land he would occupy. His official position would also be inseparably connected with the plot of land he occupied. An individual would hold and use land belonging to another on a contractual basis which would oblige him to assist his lord in performing his duties of government. Such assistance would mean attending the Lord's court for the administration of justice, police functions of maintaining law and order, to serve him as a soldier or supply him with soldiers. The last obligation of the vassal to his overlord made the Feudal system a military system as well.

*Social
division*

The third characteristic of Feudalism was the division of the social classes into two strata: the rulers and the ruled. The rulers were the individuals who possessed land, and the ruled—the people who tilled the soil. Land determined the structure of society.

*Personal
bond bet-
ween the lord
and the
vassal*

The fourth characteristic was the personal bond that governed the relationship that bound the lord and the vassal. The mutual obligations were cemented by a ceremony called oath of loyalty sworn by the vassal to the lord. The land tenure and the relationship between the vassal and the overlord were guided by the personal relationship established as a result of the oath-taking ceremony and not by any laws of the state.

*Beneficiary
nature of
land tenure*

The above characteristics of Feudalism have been summed up by Myers in what he calls the beneficiary nature of the property in land, close personal

bond between the grantor and the receiver of it, full or partial rights of sovereignty of the lord over his land.

3/ **Origin and Development of Feudalism:**

Although Feudalism did not take its final shape before the ninth or the tenth century yet its beginnings can be traced from the late Roman Empire. Even under the Carolingians there was a general tendency towards Feudalism which the Carolingian kings were unable to stop. In the century following the death of Charlemagne, Feudal system resumed its growth with tremendous acceleration. Thus Feudalism took about five hundred years before it developed into any well-defined form or manifested its characteristic features.

It is worthwhile to mention here that Feudalism derived its elements from both Roman and Teutonic customs and expedients. When entrance into knight-hood took the character of a Christian sacrament and the life of the knight became a specialised type of Christian life, Feudalism became an aspect of medieval Christianity. Thompson and Johnson rightly observe that Feudalism was "a compound of Roman, Christian and German elements, moulded into a new form by contemporary conditions of life."

The sources of the elements of Feudalism may be traced back to the ancient Roman institution of *Patrocinium* or Patronage whereby wealthy and influential persons would keep themselves surrounded by followers called *clients* who were dependents of the patrons and enjoyed their aid and support. In the time of confusion this system extended considerably. The landless, the impoverished landowners, the weak landlords, etc., would offer their services to a powerful landlord in return for shelter and support.

The *Celtic Vassus* and the German *Comitatus* were institutions almost similar to that of the Roman

Feeble trace of feudalism in the Roman empire and under the Carolingians

Growth of feudalism accelerated after Charlemagne's death—Five centuries of growth

Feudalism derived its elements from both Roman and Teutonic customs

Patrocinium: Clients

*Celtic
Vassus and
German
Comitatus*

Patrocinium. The German *Comitatus* was a sort of personal dependence of warriors on their lords. The weaker men would hold themselves in personal dependence on the stronger, and would render service, often military, in return for protection and support.

*Systems of
Precarium,
Commenda-
tion,
Beneficium,
etc.*

The systems of *Precarium*, *Commendation*, *Beneficium*, etc., were the other similar institutions which supplied the early elements of Feudalism. It was under Charles Martel that the military side of Feudalism received particular stimulus as he had to meet the repeated raids of the Arab horse-men into Southern Gaul. Charles Martel appropriated the Church lands and by granting the same as fiefs created a cavalry force to cope with the inroading Arab horse-men. This system of obtaining military service in lieu of the grants of land became henceforth so general that the former method of occasional levy of foot soldiers was given up.

*Charles
Martel's
contributions*

*Internal and
external causes
that
helped the
growth of
feudalism
A defensive
system*

The internal disorders as well as the external invasion of the Holy Roman Empire after the death of Charlemagne all the more accelerated the growth of this defensive system. This naturally strengthened the military character of feudalism. The partition of Charlemagne's Empire on his death between his feeble successors, served as an extra-inducement to chaos. The struggle between the Saracens and the Christians, the attack by the Scandinavian pirates from the north, the Hungarians from the east, hastened the disturbed state of the society everywhere within the Holy Roman Empire and it was this anarchical state of things that caused the rapid development of Feudalism. All classes of society hastened to enter the system in order to secure the protection which it alone could afford. As the system became universal, the rights and obligations of the tenant were being recognised in law. No longer was the position of the tenant precarious in the face of threatened eviction*; his status and

his rights were now legally recognised. The urgent need of security compelled the kings, princes, the church and the wealthy persons who had not yet parcelled out their lands into fiefs, to do so. Most lands which were even now allodial in character were transformed into fiefs under vassals who were bound to protect them by all sacred obligations of homage and fealty. Small-holders of land under the allodial system, on the other hand, surrendered their rights to the neighbouring lords and received them back as fiefs. For the same reason the churches and monasteries, etc., also entered into the feudal system. Even the churchmen had to render military service, although occasionally there were instances of church service in lieu of military service.

*Allodial
lands
converted
into fiefs*

*Even
churchmen
had to render
feudal
obligations*

In the above ways the state, church and all classes of the society were feudalised and were bound up by feudal ties from the highest feudal suzerain to the humblest vassal. Needless to point out that when feudalism thus brought the entire society, the state and the church within its pale, of necessity Feudalism became a political system besides being a social and economic one. The political rights and obligations of the tenants were determined with reference to the position they occupied in the feudal structure. The Tenant-in-Chief now began to enjoy the rights of private jurisdiction, of building castles and filling them with armed supporters, of striking coins, etc. They also had a right and an obligation to assist the king with their counsel and to render military service. The mutual relations of the different strata of the feudal structure were now well defined and Feudalism became a perfect system.

*State, Church
and society
feudalised*

*Rights and
obligations
of the
Tenants-in-
Chief*

4/Feudal Theory and Obligations: Feudalism had practically destroyed the power of the king, yet it saved a place for the king whose power it had destroyed. Although all real political power was in the hands of the local lords, the feudal theory made

*King,
fountain-
head of law
and justice*

*Feudal theory
provided for
destruction of
feudalism*

the king the fountain-head of law and justice. The king was also, in theory, the final source of all political rights and all land tenures. Further, the king's person, according to the feudal theory was sacrosanct and therefore inviolable. Thus in theory the feudal king possessed all the rights, a practical application of which by the king himself would destroy Feudalism itself. "Feudal theory, therefore, in its very fundamentals provided for the destruction of feudalism." Further, according to the explanation of the later feudal lawyers the legal fiction was that the king had parcelled out his kingdom into fiefs which were held from him by his vassals variously called princes, dukes, margraves, earls and counts. These lords in their turn let out their portions to their vassals by the practice called sub-infeudation. These lesser vassals were called sub-tenants or mesne lords who distributed their lands to the serfs.

*Feudal
obligations
of the vassals*

The vassal was bound to his lord by (i) ceremony of homage and (ii) oath of fealty. Ceremony of homage meant an expression of willingness on the part of the vassal to be completely the lord's man, and fealty meant a promise to be faithful to the lord. The lord would in return invest the vassal with his fief. As a result of the contractual relation struck between the lord and his vassal, the latter had the right of protection and of justice from his lord. On his part, there was the obligation (i) to render military service, (ii) to provide his lord with food and lodging while he would travel through his fief, (iii) to attend his lord's court and assist in the administration of justice, (iv) to pay money which was, however, not regarded as tax but as aid such as scutage, payment at the time of the knighting of the king's eldest son, marriage of his eldest daughter, ransoming the king himself, to pay relief or heriot which was more or less an inheritance tax, to pay wardship, i.e., the fee of guardianship when the king or the lord looked after the minor son of the dead vassal.

In the event of the failure of the line of the vassal the fief would escheat, that is, revert to the lord. The lord might forfeit the fief if the vassal violated the contract.

*System of
Escheat*

5/Contributions made by Feudalism: In spite of the many dangerous potentialities that the feudal system always possessed and the many evils that it brought in, it had its own importance. (i) The greatest contribution of feudalism to the medieval society was the protection it gave to it after the breakup of Charlemagne's empire. "Arising spontaneously to meet the need of law and order in a disorderly age, it served roughly the purpose of that rough age." It has, therefore, been regarded as the 'protest of barbarism against barbarism'. Feudalism saved the society from the marauding Danes, Saracens and the Hungarians. "Under its auspices slowly some order came out of anarchy, some justice out of force, some law out of custom, some honour out of fealty."

*Spontaneously
developed
system of
defence
needed in the
rough age*

(ii) Feudalism fostered among the lords who enjoyed a considerable amount of local independence, a spirit of individualism and personal independence. The Teutonic character also had this love of personal independence. The feudal lords who were naturally turbulent, violent and refractory, kept the spirit of liberty alive during the later medieval period. They were very much sensitive about their rights and would not hesitate to stand against an arrogant king. This prevented monarchy from becoming despotic. King John of England was held in check by the feudal lords and the Magna Carta was essentially a feudal document. Thompson and Johnson rightly observe that feudalism "nourished a colourful, live, eager, intellectually curious civilisation, moreover of great significance for the future, inasmuch as it contained many of the seeds of modern principles of democratic institutions. The feudal courts of kings and nobles developed trial by

*Love of local
independence*

*Feudalism
nourished a
colourful,
live, intellec-
tually curious
civilisation*

jury and such fundamental concepts of common law as the right to be deprived of neither life nor property without due process of law."

*Impulse to
polite
literature*

(iii) Feudalism also gave an impulse to certain forms of polite literature. Philosophy and learning were fostered in the cloister of the church and poetry and romance fostered by the open, joyous hospitalities of the baronial hall. Wandering singers and story-tellers always found the doors of the feudal halls open to them.

*Chivalry—
product of
feudalism*

(iv) The code of honour and the exalted consideration for women, which chivalry had given rise to, were also the contributions of feudalism. Chivalry was, in fact, the flower of feudalism. Chivalry brought about an excellent moral effect on the civilisation and social life of Europe.

*Rise of
sovereign
states*

(v) Feudalism also gave rise to numerous sovereign territorial states, as in Germany. The king having been looked upon as the owner of all land in the country and the fountain head of law and justice, in fact, all powers exercised by the lords, gave a legitimate ground to the kings having enough strength, intelligence and ability to create national states.

*Architectural
contributions*

(vi) The architectural contribution of the feudal society was the castle. The castle was, however, not extraordinary in its refinement but certainly massive and elaborate. Later, the feudal castle began to incorporate somewhat refined architectural shapes.

6/Defects of Feudalism: Every shield has two sides and feudalism had its defects also.

*Growth of
national
monarchy
hindered*

In the first place, it hindered the growth of strong national monarchy by dividing the country into a vast number of practically independent principalities. France, for example, was divided into 150 fiefs in the tenth century. The fact that many of these

fief-holders were stronger and richer than the king himself would in itself by a challenge to the exercise of full sovereignty by the king. It was difficult for the king to make himself obeyed and revolt of the overgrown lords against a weak king was almost chronic in feudal kingdoms. William the Conqueror made himself independent of the French king when he was the Duke of Normandy. The weakness of the central authority in comparison to the strength of the local lords produced widespread disorder and wretchedness.

In the second place, the feudal society in its rigid structure did not leave any scope for the growth of individualism among the lowest stratum of the society. The society with the feudal aristocracy at the top was exclusive, proud and oppressive. It was precisely for this exclusive and repressive conduct of the feudal aristocracy that in every revolt during the medieval times attempts were made to burn the manor houses and kill the lords.

*Rigidity of
social
structure*

7/Causes of the Decay of Feudalism: The decline and the extinction of feudalism had been due to different causes in different countries. Yet it is possible to point out certain factors which may be considered as the common causes.

*Causes of
decay varied
from country
to country*

First, the feudal system was hated by the people and disliked by the kings. It was never liked by any section of the society except the lords and nobles who enjoyed various privileges that the feudal system had ensured them. The artificial distinction between the common man and a lord, which made the former no better than games in the lords' hunting park, made struggle between the privileged and the non-privileged classes inevitable. This struggle continued through decades till the French Revolution wherein feudalism found its burial ground.

*Hatred of
the people*

Secondly, the kings opposed the system and were eager to break it down. It was only natural with

*King's
opposition*

the kings to seek to break the system which had reduced them into the position of puppets.

*Effects of the
Crusades*

Thirdly, the Crusades which had agitated the whole of Europe during the twelfth and the thirteenth centuries had taken a huge toll from among the lords who joined it in large numbers. Those who returned from the Crusades were impoverished both in health and wealth. All this had weakened the feudal aristocracy. It was almost common among the lords to raise money by selling or mortgaging their estates to meet the expenses of the Holy War. This gave opportunities to the kings and the wealthy merchants to acquire their estates. One cause which was most responsible for the decline and extinction of feudalism was the Crusades.

*Improved
method of
warfare
strengthened
the hands of
the kings*

Fourthly, the improvement and change in the method of warfare with the invention of gunpowder and the monopoly that the king exercised over its manufacture made the king militarily more powerful than the feudal lords. A musketeer was surely more powerful than a feudal lord with his armour and sword.

*Feudal
lords—
left without
sufficient
number of
supporters*

Fifthly, various forces reduced the number of the serfs and villeins, such as constant private warfare, crusades, etc. Feudal lords were naturally left without sufficient number of tenants to do their work. Further, there was increasing demand for labourers who worked on wages. Many serfs left their landed slavery to join these free labourers. In the fifteenth century feudalism as a system broke up although it had left its annoyances, particularly in France, till the French Revolution.

Chivalry

1/Definition: CHIVALRY was a “military institution or order, the members of which called *Knights* were pledged to the protection of the church and to the defence of the weak and the oppressed.” Chivalry has been very aptly regarded as the *flower of feudalism*. “Chivalry was, in the conception of the time, an order of merit. Its members were called *Knights*.” The word Chivalry originally meant simply a body of mounted troops; it being a derivative of the medieval French word—‘cheval’ meaning horse, hence French Chevalier, Spanish Caballeros, Italian Cavaliere and the English Cavalier. But gradually the word Chivalry came to mean an institution graced with such moral adornments as *truth, honour and courtesy*. It “was an important medieval institution with political, religious and juridical aspects. It was a fellowship of the nobility without fixed form or precise organisation, but with rules of conduct and professional duties attached to membership in it.”

*Knights
pledged to
protect the
Church and
the weak and
the oppressed:
Flower of
Feudalism*

*Truth,
honour and
courtesy*

2/Its Nature and Character: (1) Chivalry grew up into a social caste, a sort of corporate life but altogether different from merchant guilds.

(2) It was an international caste, that this brotherhood recognised no territorial limits. Ancestral military service was one of the very important criterion for admittance into this brotherhood of mounted warriors. Distinguished prowess of ordinary soldiers would at times be rewarded with admission into this brotherhood.

*Universal
brotherhood*

(3) “A Knight was a noble but not every noble a Knight.” A noble must have proved his quality of

*A Knight—a
noble because*

*of noble
qualities*

manhood before he could 'be struck Knight' in solemn ceremony. The institution was regarded as sacred and required elaborate rituals such as twenty-four hours' fast, confession, and communion, and the arming of the candidate by a knight or by ladies.

*Faithful to
lady-love*

(4) Chivalric loyalty to the mistress of his supreme affection was the first article in the creed of the true Knight. This was a religious belief as Hallam points out that "he who was faithful and true to his lady was held sure of salvation" according to the theology of the Knights although not of the Christians.

*Chivalrous
Knight—
gentle, brave,
courteous,
truthful, etc.*

(5) A Chivalrous Knight must as well be "gentle, brave, courteous, truthful, pure, generous, hospitable, faithful to his engagements and ever ready to risk life and limb in the cause of religion and in defence of his companions in arms." The service of Christ by purity of life and readiness of sword particularly against the Turks who possessed the holy places, was the most cardinal of all principles of Chivalry. Hallam stresses valour, loyalty, courtesy and munificence as the basic virtues of Chivalrous conduct.

*Respect for
women*

(6) To this strong tincture of religion which entered into the composition of Chivalry in the 12th century was added another distinguishing trait, viz. a great respect for the female sex.

*Civilising
influence*

(7) "Its struggle to exist in face of the old unmitigated barbarism which had become traditional with the warrior classes meant half-victory of the civilising forces; for Chivalry brought certain civilising influence upon the then barbarous society by its high 'feudal-religious' ideals."

*Some Knight-
errants were
arrant knaves*

But it must be noted as Myers points out that although there were instances in which the Knights lived up to the high ideals of a Knightly life, there

were too many who were Knights only in profession. "An errant Knight" an old writer described "was an arrant knave." Again "deeds that would disgrace a thief and acts of cruelty that would have disgusted a Hellenic tyrant or a Roman emperor were common things with Knights of the highest lineage" were the remarks of yet another writer. Hallam remarks that gallantry in those days was often adulterous and the morals of Chivalry were not pure. This is evidenced by the contemporary compositions which testify to a general dissoluteness among the Knight-errants.

Nevertheless, cruelty, treachery, untruthfulness, cowardice, baseness and crime of every sort were opposed to the spirit of Chivalry and conviction on any of such grounds would lead to one's expulsion from the brotherhood of the Knights, by the ceremony of degradation. This entailed breaking of his sword, removal of his spurs from his heels, and cutting off of his horse's tail. The degraded Knight would be dressed in a shroud and funeral ceremonies were held on him signifying that he was dead insofar as the honours of the Knights were concerned.

*Punishment
for trans-
gressing
ideals of
Chivalry*

3/Origin and Development: The germ of Chivalry lay in Charles Martel's creation of a body of vassal horsemen for combating the Saracen raids into Aquitaine. It was essentially as a measure of effective security that the Franks learnt to depend on the horses. This new military system gradually spread from south France to the rest of Europe.

*Charles
Martel's
body of
horsemen*

Chivalry or the Knight-errantry was the military side of feudalism as such its development was closely connected with the growth of feudalism. With the growth of feudalism it became the rule that all fief-holders must render military service on horseback. Gradually, fighting on horseback became the normal and effective mode of warfare and remained so for many centuries.

*Compulsory
military
service*

*Fragmenta-
tion of fiefs
helped growth
of Chivalry*

In course of time this feudal warrior-caste underwent a transformation. It became independent of feudalism and although the chief criterion for admittance into the order of the Knights remained to be the ancestral military service, yet any person if qualified by birth and properly initiated, might be a member of the order without being a fief-holder. Many of the later Knights were portionless sons of the nobility. The extreme poverty of the lower nobility due to the fragmentation of the fiefs—helped the growth of Chivalry considerably. For it became the object and the chief ambition of every noble of slender property to attain Knighthood. For “it raised him in the scale of society equalling him in dress, arms, in title to the rich landholders.” Originally the majority of Knights were either in the pay of greater Counts or were feudal holders of land as we have seen above. But the Crusades gave Chivalry its full vigour as an order of personal nobility—its original connection with feudal tenure was more or less forgotten in the splendour and dignity of the new form it wore. It became, gradually, fashion with the noble families to apprentice their sons to a high noble who was a Knight himself and as such capable of educating and instructing the apprentices. This service was a social one. The young apprentices were trained in courtesy and deportment, in the proper way to address his superiors, in the way to enter or leave a room in which superiors were, in polite speech and manners. Those who benefited by such training became gentlemen but many turned out to be bullies, snobs or even ruffians.

*Knight-hood
fashion in
noble families*

*Crusades
connected
Chivalry
with religion*

It was from the epoch of the Crusades that Chivalry came to be closely connected with religion. It is indeed strange to think how the investment of Knighthood could be regarded as a religious ceremony, as the one most important effect of such investment was to fit the noble to butcher mankind.

But the Crusades which were Holy Wars, such sanctified the use of arms that Chivalry became a religious-cum-military institution. Service of God with life and limb became a very fundamental vow of the Knights. Defence of God's law against infidels was his primary and standing duty. His sword was always open for the defence of the religion and the church. Crusades brought in the Knighthood a stir, gave it a religious basis and raised it from mental and moral lethargy and from the brutalising routine of war, drink and pillage.

Besides the tincture of religion which entered into Chivalry from the 12th century, there was added another equally distinguishing characteristic, viz.: a great respect for female sex. Loyalty to the mistress of his affection became one of the most important articles of Chivalry and it was believed that "he who was faithful and true to his lady was held sure of salvation." Defence to the "uttermost of the oppressed, the widow and the orphan and the women of noble birth should enjoy his special care."

*Great respect
for females*

Chivalry also found encouragement from sovereigns, for they found faithful supporters from this order. Thus the sovereigns displayed a lavish magnificence in festivals and tournaments "which may be reckoned as a second means of keeping up the tone of Chivalrous feeling. In England and France kings held great festivals wherein the name of Knight was always a title to admittance. The most magnificent of such festivals was the one celebrated by Philip Duke of Burgundy in 1453. Tournament, hunting, hawking, etc., were the favourite amusements of the Knights. Knightly tournaments were attended by king and they remained to be the most favourite diversion even after the spirit of Chivalry had declined in Europe. A similar amusement was joust. In the tournament the arena was marked off by ropes within which the Knights would display

*Encouragement from
sovereigns*

*Tournament,
hunting,
hawking, etc.*

their military skill. A joust was, however, a trial of strength between two Knights and was attended with less ceremony.

*Knight
entitled to
great respect*

Both honorary and substantial privileges belonged to the condition of Knighthood and had of course a tendency to preserve its credit. A Knight was distinguished at large by his helmet, weighty armour, etc. He was entitled to great respect. The privileges and respect attached to Chivalry was of great advantage to the inferior gentry, called the Vavassors, who by entering into the order of the Knights counterbalanced the originally superior influence of the feudal lords due to their wealth and properties.

*Knights
brave
fighters*

The customs of Chivalry were maintained by their connection with military service. The Knights held a great prestige as brave fighters. Even when the feudal armies were being gradually superseded by regular armies, there was a great bid for the Knightly warriors.

*Chivalry
contained in
itself the
seeds of
decay*

4/Its Decay: "Like the Franciscan movement Chivalry carried within its bosom the seeds of its own decay, forgot its ideal, became corrupt. Its code became fantastic, its demeanour arrogant. It came to exhibit the evils, not the virtues of caste." "In fact the institution we call Chivalry produced some singularly ugly characteristic. Many men failed the ideal and many perverted it. The perverse growth seemed for a time to strangle the true and indeed brought its downfall as a social system." Yet like all human institutions Chivalry fell into decay;—it was the 'evening of Chivalry' as Myers puts it.

*Causes of the
decay of
Chivalry
analogous to*

The causes of the decay of Chivalry were essentially those of the decay of feudalism, for the simple reason that both these institutions were complementary.

- (1) The invention of gun-powder and its monopolistic control by the kings, the gradual growth of the system of standing army and the advantages of a well-trained infantry served as important factors for the decay of Chivalry. The system of Knighthood still continued in France, which was its cradle, but the fatal accident of Henry II, King of France, who was killed by a lance when witnessing a Knightly tournament led to the abolition of Chivalry in France.
- the causes of decay of feudalism*
- Invention of gun-powder : well-trained infantry*
- (2) With the progress of civilisation new ideas began to work upon the imagination of men. People began to seek distinction in things other than Chivalrous adventures.
- Change in ideas— distinction sought in things other than Chivalry*
- (3) As time progressed, the government became more orderly and efficient and there was better security for the life and property of the weak. Thus Chivalry outlived its necessity for protecting the weak and the oppressed: "Old order changeth yielding place to new."
- Better security eliminated need for Chivalry*
- (4) The profession with which the Chivalrous order was lavished under Charles VI made the Knights luxurious, and vices began to grow into the order of Chivalry.
- Knights became luxurious*
- (5) The establishment of companies of ordnance, i.e. co-ordinated companies of military fighters by Charles VII, served as another nail in the coffin of Chivalry.
- Companies of ordnances— another blow to Chivalry*
- (6) Again Francis I began to extend the Knightly honours to lawyers and other men of civilian occupation. This introduced a non-military element into the Knightly order and as it swelled in number, the Chivalrous order lost its distinctive character.
- Introduction of nonmilitary elements in Knightly order*
- (7) Besides, the progress of reason and literature which made ignorance discreditable even in a soldier and exposed the follies of romance to a ridicule was too much for the decadent Knight-errantry to endure. The extravagant romance and adventures of
- Progress of reason and literature : Knighthood ridiculed*

the Knight-errants at a time (16th century) which was practical and commercial—for it was a time of reason—became as fantastic as ridiculous. In the seventeenth century when Knight-errantry became absurd and contemptible to the people, Chivalry staged its departure from the world. The seventeenth century attitude towards Chivalry is to be seen in the Spanish satirist Cervantes' book *Don Quixote*.

*Not an
unmixed
blessing*

5/Contribution of Chivalry: Chivalry was not an unmixed blessing. Writers have been both admiring and severely critical of the legacy of Chivalry. It has been remarked by James—"For the mind Chivalry did little; for the heart it did everything." But Myers points out that even in respect of heart, its influence was not wholly good.

*Chivalry
regarded as
anti-Christ*

(1) "The system had many vices, the chief among which were its aristocratic, exclusive tendencies." Dr. Arnold would call the spirit of Chivalry as the spirit of evil deservedly called spirit of anti-Christ.

*Knights
looked upon
lower classes
with
contempt and
disregard*

(2) The Knights could not comprehend that they could be guilty to the lower classes. They looked upon the lower classes with contempt and indifference and would consider them as destitute of claims upon the people of noble birth. The common people were no better than games to the Knights. The beautiful women of gentle birth were the only ones whose wrongs they would avenge, but not that of the common woman. Hallam points out that it would be unjust to class those acts of oppression or disorder among the abuses of Knighthood which were committed in spite of its regulations, in fact, these were prevented by the Knighthood from becoming more extensive. But Hallam also points out the following three bad consequences of Chivalry. (i) Dissoluteness which almost unavoidably resulted from the prevailing tone of gallantry. Yet with

*Evil effects
of Chivalry*

coarse immorality there could be seen most fanciful refinements. (ii) Undue thirst for military renown was its another fault. (iii) The third reproach was the character of Knighthood, it widened the separation between different classes of society and confirmed aristocratic spirit of high birth.

(a) "The spirit of Chivalry left behind it a more valuable successor. The character of Knight gradually subsided in that of gentleman; and the one distinguishes European society in the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries as much as the other did in the preceding ages." The Cavaliers of Charles I were the genuine successors of Edward I's Knights.

*Good effects:
'Gentlemen'
a more
valuable
successor of
Knights*

(b) Chivalry also contributed to the refining influence that lifted the sentiment of romantic respect for the gentler sex into that tender veneration which is the distinguishing characteristic of the present age and "makes it differ from all preceding phases of civilisation".

*Refining
influence:
Respect for
gentler sex*

(c) Besides, "Chivalry did much to create that ideal character—an ideal distinguished by the virtues of courtesy, gentleness, humanity, and fidelity which surpassed similar ideals of the antiquity." Just as Christianity gave to the world an ideal manhood, which it was to strive to realise, so did Chivalry hold up an ideal to which men were to conform their lives. Chivalry left an influence that produced a new type of manhood—'a Knightly and Christian character.' It helped to raise the standard of customary conduct and in this way working on a parallel line to that of the church.

*Contributions
to the crea-
tion of ideal
character*

(d) The most important contribution of Chivalry was the development of native languages and literatures. "Since there were so many new ideas setting within minds of men the more gifted souls naturally stimulated utterance." Their songs came from their heart in spontaneous idioms. The age of Chivalry

*Development
of native
language and
literature*

was the period of triumphant ushering of the French, Italian, English and German languages and literatures. Instead of the corrupt Latin used by both the churches and the universities, the Knights found their own mother-tongue more responsive and plastic. Thus local languages were developed considerably, as were local literatures. The Troubadours who chiefly confined themselves to subjects of love or gallantry and to satires were born of Chivalry. The medieval Knight-errantry also served as themes for later poets like Tennyson, Chaucer, Dante, and others.

The Empire: Its Revival

1/ Henry the Fowler : Founding of the German Monarchy : OUT OF THE DISSOLVED Carolingian Empire, the kingdom of Germany was to emerge first during the late ninth century. Two factors conduced to the restoration of monarchical control in Germany.

Emergence of the kingdom of Germany : Factors contributing to it

First, in Franconia and Swabia, despite depletion of the royal domains, forest estates, etc., these were yet quite extensive and scattered. While these scattered estates prevented formation of any solid royal *demesne* (domain), these prevented the unusual growth of the power of the local lords and consequently gave the Crown, a great possibility, if really capable, of local supervision and control. The merits of the scattered estates could be seen under William the Conqueror in England.

Scattering of estates

Secondly, the land-grabbing lay lords became a direct challenge to the churchmen and in order to save their own interests the latter rallied round the king.

Lay lords— a challenge to the Church rallied round the king

Thirdly, the churchmen were by education, interest and tradition partisans of monarchy under the patronage of which they played a leading role in the unforgotten past. They also subscribed to the idea of a civilised state expressed in the kingship.

Churchmen partisans of monarchy Conrad— elected king

When the male line of the eastern branch of the Carolingians became extinct with the death of Lewis the Child, son of Arnulf, the nobles and the people of Germany elected Conrad I (911), Duke of Franconia and after him Henry Duke of Saxony, nicknamed, *the Fowler*, as the king (919), both representing the female line of Charlemagne.

Henry Duke of Saxony elected king

*Henry Fowler
founder of a
firm monarchy*

*His character
and aims*

His activities

*Signing of
nine years'
treaty with
the Magyars*

It was Henry the Fowler who laid the foundations of a firm monarchy. With his family estate, the duchy of Saxony, he brought the tribal loyalty of the turbulent Saxons who looked upon him as their chief. 'Personally, he was a constructive statesman, strong and practical'. His activities as king were a continuation of what he had begun as the Duke of Saxony. Till his election to the kingship of Germany he was an ardent champion of ducal autonomy in his native Saxony and Thuringia, and as a king he wanted little more than becoming the effective head of a confederation of princes and dukes. His refusal to be anointed by the Bishop of Mainz was a clear proof of his lack of inclination to accept the centralised monarchical authority as signified by such anointing. But he would certainly demand recognition of his authority by the dukes and was determined to bring the duchies under the control of the monarchy and to ensure that they took their place within the framework of a united kingdom. This problem engrossed his energies as also of his son Otto I. Duke of Swabia was reduced but he was reinstated as Duke subject to his admitting royal authority, surrendering royal estates within Swabia and accepting royal nomination of its bishop. Arnulf, surnamed *the Bad* of Bavaria was, however, granted more liberal terms. Arnulf was proclaimed king by the Bavarians but was compelled to submit on the conditions that he would strike his own coins, nominate his bishops and conduct his foreign policy. Henry was not contented with his four duchies of Bavaria, Saxony, Franconia and Thuringia. He was determined to add Lotharingia to his dominions and succeeded in doing so by defeating Duke Gilbert in 925 and making this duchy an integral part of German kingdom. In this way he became the unquestioned chief of a ducal confederation. Apart from these, three things for which Henry could claim to be remembered by the German posterity were, his defence of Germany against Hungarian

attack. In 924 the Hungarians or Magyars invaded Saxony but Henry was then militarily weak to meet them in the field. He signed a nine years' treaty with them on condition of payment of a heavy annual tribute. But the time was spent by him in putting his country to a good state of defence and in improving his army. He founded new cities and towns and had them walled up. Most noteworthy of the walled towns were Meissen, Merseburg, and Quedlingburg. There were, however, walled towns even before Henry II's time, but it was he that gave a great impulse to town life and under him German towns became more numerous which gave Germany its important citizen class in the following centuries. Commerce was also thereby greatly promoted. He supplemented his defence by improving the training of his troops and by creation of a cavalry force. All this proved very much helpful in his warfare with the Slavs.

Growth of towns and commerce

Henry wrested territories from the Danes in the north, and the Slav tribes collectively known as Wends on the east. He stopped annual tribute to the Magyars on the expiry of nine years and met them in the field and defeated them with heavy loss. The good results of his improved method of defence, the walled towns, the cavalry and the trained army became now apparent.

Wrested territories from Danes and Slavs : Stopped tributes to the Magyars

Towards the end of his reign Henry seemed to have changed his policy towards the church. He gave count's power to the bishop of Toul in Lotharingia, imitating the policy of the French Carolingians. This foreshadowed the policy of alliance of the monarchy and the church under his son Otto I. Before his death Henry had his son's succession recognised and nobody disputed Otto I's election to his father's throne.

His changed policy of reliance upon the Church

2/ Otto I (936-73) : With the accession of Otto I (the Great) in 936, we see in Germany a monarch

Most powerful monarch after Charlemagne
His coronation

more powerful than those that had appeared in Europe since the death of Charlemagne. The new king signalled his conception of kingship by his solemn sacring and coronation at Aachen, in Charlemagne's basilica. The coronation was performed by the Archbishop of Mainz, and in the banquet that followed, important Dukes did him service as his chamberlain, butler, steward, and marshal. The coronation symbolised the unity of Carolingian monarchy and Germany with the support of the episcopate.

His aims and ideas

Otto was a man of great conceptions. He was determined to enforce his authority throughout Germany. The great dukes were to be his vassals and servitors and their estates were to be royal fiefs. He would not be satisfied with the role his father played, of being the duke of the dukes. But he meant to turn the feudal ideal symbolised in service of the dukes, Duke of Lorraine working as his chamberlain, Duke of Franconia his steward, Duke of Swabia his butler, and Duke of Bavaria as his marshal in the coronation banquet, into a reality. His conception of monarchy also meant bringing internal peace and orderly justice. While he used the church as a loyal support, he furthered its ideals and culture as also its civilising mission in the turmoil of the time. His ambition expanded with his fortunes. With his assumption of the position of the chief of the western kings and his conquest of Italy, he aimed at restoration of Charlemagne's empire and the secular headship of the Christendom.

Church used as a loyal support

His character and ability

Nature had made Otto equal to the task his ambitions suggested. His practical wisdom, his persevering fortitude and his occasional magnanimous tolerance and mercy stood him in good stead in turning his ambition to a reality. Had the harmony that prevailed at the coronation banquet continued throughout his reign, Otto's history would have been altogether different. But the symptoms of the new

order soon made the dukes express their bitter antipathy to the monarchy; they would brook no interference in their local affairs.

If Otto were not willing to revert to his father's policy of being the duke of the dukes forgoing his ambition to build a strong and united Germany, he had but one course open before him; this was alliance with the church, bishops and archbishops against the common enemy the tribal feudalism. He realised the necessity of counterbalancing the influence of the duke and nobles by that of the church. To this end he took out the control of the church and the church property from the hands of the dukes and appointed a new class of officials, the count palatinate—the German *Pfalzgraf* to have charge of the crownland within the duchies and to act as a kind of *missus* representing the king in his dealing with the dukes. As the success of Otto's policy of controlling and uniting Germany depended on the royal control of the German Church, he would nominate bishop and abbot and have the most binding claim on their continued loyalty. Although the election of the abbots and bishops remained as a matter of form, the real decision lay with the king. He appointed his trained chaplains, and often his kinsmen like William, Bruno, and others, to important *Sees*. Such newly appointed churchmen would do homage to him and would be invested with their offices and lands by the king. Not only that, the *crozier*, *i.e.* the care of the soul was also entrusted to their care. But the *crozier* could be conferred by the metropolitan and not by the king. In this way, Otto who did not otherwise interfere with the bishops' or abbots' spiritual functions was their master as state officials. The bishops and abbots became a combination of secular and spiritual characters and it became difficult at times for them to decide whose claim, the king's or of the church was to receive preference. Otto's bishops were men of great pious

*His alliance
with the
Church
against
tribal
feudalism*

*The Counts
palatinate*

*Trained
chaplains
appointed
to important
Sees*

*Otto's bishops
were pious
men of great
repute*

*Churchmen a
counterpoise
to the dukes*

Bruno

*Problem of
protection of
Germany
from the
marauding
inroads of
the Wends*

zeal and of great repute. But in the system of a dual character that Otto had vested them with, kept in hiding the flaw of Otto's system which was to show itself later. From Otto's point of view alliance with the church was worth trying, for, the clergy supplied the best educated and trained men in Germany at that time. The bishops were recognised to be the best administrators in the then feudal society. From the point of view of the church as well, the alliance was desirable, for, the church was one with the king thwarting the ambition of the dukes and the counts. Further, many of the dukes were profiting by confiscation of the church property. The alliance with the king now gave the church an opportunity to pay the grabbing dukes and counts in their own coins. The bishops also rendered feudal services of vassals to the Crown. The most important service was their military aid. The armies of the Ottos were composed of episcopal contingents and the art of warfare was one of the episcopal attainments. But among the secularised clergy were men like Bruno who was perhaps the most representative of the alliance between the state and the church, and at the same time typical of the tenth century church at its best. But all the same the honest zeal with which men like Bruno also served the church imperceptively contributed to the cure of the ills of the church and fitted it to stand as a challenge to the imperial authority in no distant time.

Otto I's policy of united Germany also presupposed his protection of the country from the marauding inroads of the Wends between the Elbe and the Oder. He waged ceaseless warfare with Wends. In his efforts to fight the Wends Otto was immensely helped by two Saxon counts Herman Billung and Gero who set up two marches in the territories conquered. Bohemia was conquered by Otto himself. Christianity and German domination were the twin aspects of Otto's conquest of the

heathen countries. Sees were set up in these newly conquered territories.

Otto also kept the Magyars at bay. In 955 they were stopped on the river Lech and beaten by troops from different duchies. The battle of Lechfield as it is called, ended the menace of the Magyar invasions. Charles the Great's outmark was revived in this area and Bavarian colonists were moved into this revived mark.

*Magyars
kept at bay*

Reconstruction of the empire of Charlemagne did not lose its importance with Otto I despite his preoccupation in the east. But none could perhaps meddle in the affairs of Italy without getting involved with the papacy. In 961 Pope John XII was crying for protection against Berengar who had designs on the papal states. Like Charlemagne, Otto also came to Pope's protection against the Italian enemies and was crowned Roman Emperor (Feb. 962). In return for renewing the donations of Pipin and Charlemagne, Otto forced from the Pope his right to appoint election to the papal Chair. John XII did it seemingly but on the departure of Otto began to conspire with his own enemy Berengar to undo what he had agreed to. This called for Otto's return to Italy in 963. He forced the Romans to promise that they would never elect a Pope without the Emperor's consent and summoned a local synod which deposed John XII and elected Leo VIII as Pope. But on Otto's departure Leo VIII was driven out of the city by John XII. But John was put to death by one of the victims of his profligacy. But the Romans who shared John XII's resentment of a strong German rule, elected Benedict V as the Pope, without caring to consult Otto. In 964 Otto again crossed over to Italy and summoned another synod which deposed Benedict and replaced Leo VIII to the papal throne. Leo's successor John XIII was, however, elected with the consent of the emperor but a rebellion in Rome drove him out of Italy. This

*Otto's
protection of
the Pope*

*Deposition of
Pope Benedict
by Otto*

time (966) Otto came and wreaked a terrible vengeance against the Romans who were directly or indirectly implicated with the rebellion and restored his own nominee John XIII. This was the end of the attempt to set up anti-Popes, and Otto's authority to approve papal elections was vindicated.

3/ Revival of the Empire : Empires of Otto and Charlemagne compared : The empire restored by Otto was commonly supposed to have been the reappearance of Charlemagne's empire. It was also the common belief that the empire of Charlemagne was only in abeyance, but not extinct. Naturally enough, with Otto I's coronation in 962, there was the satisfying belief that 'there appeared among the princes of Europe a second Charlemagne'.

Common belief—reappearance of Charlemagne's empire

Otto's personal belief of restoration of the empire

Otto's Count Palatines were missi dominici in new shape

Otto's coronation in 962—a repetition of the coronation of 800

It was also the personal belief of Otto that he was restoring the empire of Charlemagne. In fact, the entire West lived in the idea that there must be an emperor, and the world would not exist without one. Thus the idea of a restoration of the empire which was only in abeyance and was to rise again was shared equally by the contemporaries of Otto as well as he himself. There were other apparent similarities which would lead one to believe in the theory of restoration of the empire of Charlemagne by Otto I. In the organisation of the empire Otto I appointed Count Palatinate to keep watch over the interests of the crown all over Germany. These Count Palatines were the reappearance of the Carolingian *missi dominici* in another form.

Again, the essence of Otto I's church policy was the extension of the imperial control over the papacy. In this also Otto was consciously or unconsciously following the footsteps of Charlemagne. No less was the coronation ceremony of Otto an imitation or rather a repetition of the imperial coronation of 800 A.D. In 962, just a little more than a century and a half later than the coronation of Charlemagne

at Rome, Otto I's coronation took place at the same place and by the same authority. The theocratic empire of Charlemagne was thus restored. No wonder, to the contemporaries as well as to the posterity Otto I appeared to have been a reviver of the Carolingian empire. But there were differences between the restored empire of Otto I and that of Charlemagne, although to some historians it was simply a continuation—a prolongation of Charlemagne's empire.

The empire of Otto I differed from that of Charlemagne in many respects. In the first place, Charlemagne had passed the imperial crown to his son but by the time of Otto it was regarded as wholly elective, for, it was connected with the German kingship which itself was elective. Charlemagne had crowned his son himself but Otto could not exercise so much control over the disposal of the imperial crown and could not leave it as a patrimony to his son and successor.

*Difference
between the
empires of
Charlemagne
and Otto :
Elective*

In the second place, the political objective of Otto's assumption of imperial title as Barraclough points out which was the conquest and Germanisation of the Slavonic east, differed from that of Charlemagne. This could be achieved once Otto was assured of papal backing. The imperial title was extremely valuable to Otto because it conferred the moral right to pursue, and assured him of clerical support in pursuing, a policy of eastern expansion. Conversion of the infidel was part of the imperial mission, a duty owed by the emperor to the Church.

*Different
political
objectives*

In the third place, the empire of Otto was less wide in extent and less populous. It comprised Germany proper, two-thirds of Italy while Charlemagne's empire comprised the whole west

Less wide

In the fourth place, the restored empire of Otto I was less ecclesiastical. Otto had, however, exalted

*Less eccle-
siastical*

Religion held a less important place in Otto's mind the spiritual potentates of his realm and was almost as earnest as Charlemagne in spreading Christianity. He was the 'master of the Pope and the defender of the Holy Roman Empire'. He had allied himself with and strengthened the clergy and did nothing to lower their moral tone. His bishops and archbishops were men of ability and genuine piety. Yet religion held a less important place in his mind and in his administration. He made fewer war for its sake, summoned no religious councils and did not criticise the discourses of the bishops.

Less Roman In the fifth place, Otto I's empire was less Roman for he associated with the name nothing more than the right to universal dominion and certain supervision of matters spiritual. It is difficult to determine if Otto's Roman character meant anything more than this or the extent to which he believed himself to be treading the steps of earlier Caesars. He had a very little knowledge of Latin, and few learned men around him. Under him the imperial control was less commanding. The local potentates would not yield to the imperial capitularies. The *Placita* (assembly) at which these capitularies or laws were framed or published would not be crowded, as of old, by armed freemen.

Imperial control under Otto less commanding

Otto's empire shadow of Charlemagne's In the sixth place, the Holy Roman Empire founded by Otto I was but a shadow of Charlemagne's empire and this was partly due to the superficial character of Otto himself. Otto's empire lacked that real element of universality which characterised Charlemagne's theocratic monarchy. The reason is to be seen in the rise of the sentiment of nationality due to language and historical continuity, which had begun to make itself felt during the time of Otto I. The Germans, the Frenchmen, and the Italians formed *peoples* at the time of Otto.

Otto's empire less theocratic In the seventh place, the empire of Otto was less theocratic, for its boundaries did not coincide with

the extent of the Church, as was the case with Charlemagne's empire. Unlike Charlemagne, Otto never sought to build up an imperial administration or imperial jurisprudence.

Yet what Otto did, he did for good purpose. He was the founder of the Medieval Holy Roman Empire of the German nations. By his constant efforts he succeeded in introducing an order and prosperity unknown before and left everywhere the impress of a heroic character. Under him the Germans not only became a unified nation but was raised on a pinnacle amongst European peoples as an imperial race—the possession of Rome and Rome's authority. Political contact with Rome brought with it knowledge and culture which gave a stimulus to further progress. The cultural achievements of Germany under Otto made her the mistress of the neighbouring tribes who trembled at Otto's sceptre. Even considered from the point of view of the empire, it is true to say that the Holy Roman Empire as it was understood in the later centuries as denoting the sovereignty of Germany and Italy vested in the Germanic prince was the creation of Otto. Otto's empire was firmer and more lasting, since based on a social order which Charlemagne's empire lacked.

Otto founded the Medieval Holy Roman Empire of the Germans

Germany made mistress of neighbouring tribes

Both substantially and technically it is correct to regard Otto's empire as the prolongation of the empire of Charles as it was based on ideas essentially the same as those which brought about the coronation of 800 A.D.

Otto's empire prolongation of Charles'

But as Bryce points out, a revival is more or less a revolution. It is more so when a lapse of time makes it impossible to restore the original thing wholly. The lapse of 150 years after the death of Charlemagne brought with it such changes that made the position of Otto far less commanding and less autocratic than his predecessor's. As Orton

Bryce's opinion

remarks, 'resting on the tradition of Charlemagne, it was really new'. Barraclough observes¹ that 'Otto's empire has often been described as the linear descendant or heir of the Carolingian empire; but in fact, it was not so much to Charlemagne that Otto looked back as to Lothar I'. Charlemagne had ruled the Church, Otto was only its protector. In Italy Otto succeeded in making a clever balancing of lay and the ecclesiastical magnates. The central authority was very much restricted under Otto.

*Conclusion :
Otto's empire
not heir to
that of
Charlemagne*

From the differences between the two empires, it is difficult to regard the empire of Otto as the heir to that of Charlemagne. The difference also was there in the inner character of the two. All these gave new claims to Otto I's empire. He could hardly be regarded as successor to Charlemagne's empire or a restorer of his empire; he was rather a second founder, despite apparent similarities between the two empires.

*Motive
behind Otto's
Italian
policy*

4/ Otto's Italian Policy : A German Necessity : Otto I's Italian policy was no innovation, rather it was a follow up of the political tendencies of the past seventy-five years. The history of the German relation with Italy drove him to seek the imperial title which expressed hegemony over the disputed lands on the southern and south-western borders of Germany. Barraclough rightly remarks that Otto was pursuing the policy of a German national king even when in 962 he left Germany to receive the imperial crown in Rome. Out of the last twelve years of Otto's life, ten were spent in Italy. This long stay was necessitated both by the complications with Byzantium which resisted establishment of a new emperor in the west, as also by his German necessity. From what Otto had written back to Germany from Italy it also becomes manifest that he had a third motive—to seize Calabria and Apulia in the event of a war with Byzantium.

In north Italy Otto's policy was conservative in character. He was emperor, and king of the Lombards, but he allowed to keep his power indirect. The long years of anarchy and civil war had effected changes which were confirmed and stabilised by Otto. In particular Otto confirmed the powers which the bishops had acquired in cities at the expense of the counts. He allowed all rights previously exercised to be enjoyed only if these were exercised in subordination of the Emperor.

*His North
Italian policy*

Otto I's Italian policy was extremely simple, having limited objectives. His imperialism was of a negative nature, for it was content with a loose hegemony, building up his own party among the Italian nobility. By grants of privileges and far-reaching concessions he succeeded on a short-term to enlist the support and loyalty of the bishops which proved transient as soon as the emperor was absent. This Otto realised at the end of his reign, when he decreased the privileges of the bishops. All the same Otto's Italian policy was necessitated by German requirement. The first few years of Otto I's rule taught him the bitter lesson that the extravagant overtures of loyalty of the German dukes were but lip-homage and that their antipathy to monarchy was almost an ingrained tradition. Even the experiment of putting members of his own family proved no more successful than his earlier attempts to control the dukes. The members of his family identified themselves too easily with the local tradition and interests. The only way of dealing with the menace he saw in an alliance with the church. Otto naturally began to pursue the policy of counterbalancing the influence of the dukes as well as of the lesser nobility and of the counts by relying more and more for support on the bishops and the archbishops. The control of the church properties was taken out of the hands of the local dukes and counts and vested in the local church. The German

*Policy of
enlisting
support of
the bishops
by concession*

*Otto's
realisation of
the lip-
loyalty of the
German
dukes*

*Only way—
alliance with
the church*

Pfalzgraf

*Bishops and
archbishops
played
against the
dukes and
counts*

*Otto
controlled
church
appointments*

*Creation of
new arch-
bishopric*

church was traditionally in favour of monarchy and against the dukes, and Otto used this sentiment to good effect. In this way Otto established certain definite spheres of influence within the duchies. In some cases he appointed a new class of officials called the count palatinate—the German *Pfalzgraf* who was to have charge of crown land within the duchies and to act as a special kind of *missus* representing the king in his dealings with the dukes. The royal authority in towns and the adjoining countryside was given to the bishops who were to enjoy even committal powers. Thus Otto played the bishops and the archbishops against the dukes, counts and the nobles, and used them as a counterpoise against their influence. As the king entrusted his secular authority to the church, so he also enriched the church with lands.

Since the king placed so much of power into the hands of the bishops, it was essential for him to maintain control over them and their appointments. This was, however, an imitation of the policy of Charlemagne. Otto followed the policy of filling the church vacancies with members of his family. In 953 his brother Bruno was made the archbishop of Cologne, his illegitimate son William replaced Frederick of Mainz, the nucleus of revolt, as archbishop. His cousin Henry was made archbishop of Traves. But these were temporary expedients, not a permanent remedy. "Instead of building the monarchy on a secure constitutional foundation, he buttressed it up with ecclesiastical support."

As Otto stood as the protector of the clergy and the church, the greedy bishops and archbishops were in many cases trying to secularise the ecclesiastical property. Further the bishops also gradually began to secure for themselves local power and authority and even began to resist Otto's policy of church aggrandisement. When Otto formed a scheme of withdrawing eastern Saxony and the Wendish

march from the obedience of the archbishop of Mainz and creating a new archbishopric, his design was resisted by William his son. William's representation to the Pope induced the latter to take no steps to implement Otto's plan for creating a new bishopric. This taught Otto a new lesson. He realised that the German church was after all not sufficing. He could only ensure the obedience of the German church by securing the submission and co-operation of the head of the Christian world. So long as the Pope was outside his power, Otto's dream of dominating Germany through churchmen seemed likely to end in a rude awakening. To complete this aspect of his policy required vigorous intervention in Italy.

If the need for controlling the German church was one of the reasons besides Otto's dream of wearing the Italian crown, to interfere in Italian affairs, the other was the necessity of disentangling the Italian crown from the ugly contest that was raging in Italy between Lothar and Berengar II, in which Otto's son Ludolf and brother Henry took sides. Otto tried to gain the dual authority but in the contest that was going on in Italy, he saw the chance of the dukes getting the Italian crown. This was a prospect which Otto was bound to dispose of, both due to his necessity to keep the German dukes under control and gratifying this long-cherished aim of imperial dignity. Otto's necessity was soon found to coincide with that of Pope John XII's coronation of Otto in 962.

*A lever to
keep German
dukes under
control*

The subsequent history of the making and remaking of the Popes and the assertion of the great unqualified German control of the Popes by Otto was but the inevitable result of Otto's willingness to maintain his hold over the German church and the dukes. Henceforth the history of medieval Germany, for better or worse, was indissolubly bound up with Italy and the papacy. And there can hardly be any

*Making and
remaking
of the Popes*

*Italian
policy a way
to strength-
ening his
position in
Germany*

doubt that what Otto did in Italy, only strengthened his position in Germany. "Otto ruled the Elbe with power borrowed from the Tiber." Otto I has, however, been charged for having 'diverted the national history of the German people out of its natural orbit, stimulated a false ambition in the minds of the German kings and entailed the expenditure of an enormous amount of German blood and treasure beyond the Alps to no profitable use.' But as Barraclough points out, Otto's intervention in Italy was undertaken in the interests of a purely German policy.

*Continuation
of Carolin-
gian politics*

Barraclough justifies Otto's Italian policy on other grounds as well. It was no adventurist policy, it lay within the framework of late Carolingian politics.

*Intervention
justified*

Further, if Otto had rejected the idea of intervention in Italy, others would have acted in his stead, such as the dukes of Swabia and Bavaria. In fact, Otto delayed intervention in Italy so long as events there had not assumed threatening posture.

*Need for
filling the
void*

The circumstances of the time called for some solution, since dissolution of authority in the Middle Kingdom (i.e. Burgundy, Lorraine) including Italy left a void which had to be filled if not by Otto, certainly by others'.

*To Otto I
Germany
was first*

It must not be lost sight of that for Otto I as also for Otto III later, Germany came first. Aachen Gnesen and Prague were scenes of his activities, as well as Rome. 'Charlemagne was his model and inspiration.'

*German
endorsement*

Otto I's pursuit of imperial policy and union of the German kingship with the imperial crown received German support presumably, for there was no opposition to his policy in Germany. Royal intervention in Italy was not detrimental to German interests.

5/ Otto II (973-83) : Otto II although able and sincere did not possess his father's genius. His imagination fostered by his brilliant wife Theophano was captivated by the lofty imperial idea of Otto I. It was his lot to resist the decadence that had already set in. The weaknesses of his father's edifice began showing themselves. Lotharingia was in turmoil due to the ambitions of the feudal nobles who had a sneaking inclination towards the Carolingians of France. Particularism made Bavaria restive where his cousin Henry aimed at independence. In Rome the instinct of disorderly independence was showing itself. The house of Crescentius even put up an anti-Pope Boniface VII after murdering the legitimate Pope Benedict VI.

*Lofty
imperial
ideas :
Lacked
father's
genius*

His problems

Otto II suppressed Henry the Wrangler of Bavaria and for better protection of Bavaria by organising northern Bavaria as a march and entrusting it to one Berthold of Babenburg. The east mark of Bavaria was placed under Liutpold. Duchy of Carinthia was severed from Bavaria and given to Henry the Younger, cousin of Henry the Wrangler. Henry the Younger was later deposed for his collusion with his cousin, and Otto, son of Conrad the Red was placed in Carinthia. Bavaria was thus shorn of its exceptional independence although the menace of two Henries still remained.

His exploits

Otto also successfully warded off the Danes in the north. But the French king Lothar despite Otto's scheme of pacifying him by placing Lothar's brother as duke of lower Lorraine, invaded and captured Aachen and nearly took Otto himself. Otto ventured a counter-attack and eventually a nominal reconciliation took place.

*Warding off
Danish
menace*

Having brought some order out of the prevailing confusion in Germany, Otto II turned to Italy. His Italian ambition of carrying the banner of the empire into southern Italy against the Byzantines,

*Order
restored*

*Italian
policy*

and to drive the Saracens back to Sicily was unsuccessful. In 982 he was completely defeated near Stilo. This defeat not only had frustrated his Italian scheme, but rocked the empire to its very foundations. The flower of the German nobility had been lost in this battle with the Saracens. Soon the Danes came to invade the borders, the Slavs rose into revolt and despite the fact that the Saxon margraves drove the Wendish inroads, all the northern part of Otto the Great's annexations was lost to Germany and the Christendom. His policy towards the papacy was no more successful. His appointing of John XIV as Pope outraged the Roman feeling. Soon after his death Crescentius II seized power in Italy and set up Boniface VII as anti-Pope, and on his death put John XV of ill repute as the anti-Pope.

*Struggle for
power in
Italy on
Otto's death***6/ Otto III (983-1002) : His Aims and Policy :***Early life
and character*

Otto's naturally mystic character, his education under the papacy and his Byzantine notions of the sacredness of the empire which he had inherited from his mother, filled his mind 'with glowing visions of the kingdom of God on earth in which Pope and Emperor ruled in harmony over a world that enjoyed perfect peace and idyllic happiness'. Otto lived in the solemn millennial era of the birth of Christ and thought it to be his sacred duty to 'renew the majesty of the city (Rome) and make her again the capital of world-embracing empire, victorious as Trajan's, despotic as Justinian's, holy as Constantine's'. To his gorgeous fancies Otto III lost the realities of his times and no wonder his aims and schemes grew mystic and visionary. "His young and visionary mind was too much dazzled by the gorgeous fancies it created to see the world as it was—Germany rude, Italy unquiet, Rome corrupt and faithless." This divorce of the aims from the realities of the world foredoomed all his high idealism to failure. It was bound to be so, for, "in the

*His lofty
ideas**Lack of
appreciation
of realities*

case of Otto III the ideal of empire triumphed over the reality." He called himself 'servant of the Apostles', and 'servant of Jesus Christ'. His ideals were no doubt "generous, noble and unselfish but in the iron age in which he lived, they were hopelessly unpractical." His idea was to become the 'wonder of the world' as well as the 'renewer of the empire'.

*Idea of
empire
triumphed
over reality*

The seat of the renewed empire could be the imperial city of Rome only, and to effect this he began building up an imperial palace on the Aventine, on the site of the palace of the early Caesars. His high notions of the Byzantine empire led him to abandon the Saxon life and adopt all the devices of the Byzantine court-etiquette and oriental exclusiveness. Teutonic titles were dropped and new titles after the Byzantine manner were adopted. The Chamberlain became the *Protovestiaris*, the Counsellor, the *Logothetes*, the generals the *Comites Imperialis Militiae* and so on. Even the wording of his laws witnesses to the strange mixture of notions that filled his eager brain. "We have ordained in order that the Church of God being freely and firmly established, our empire may be advanced and the crown of our knighthood triumph, that the power of the Roman people may be extended and the commonwealth be restored; so may we be found worthy after living righteously in the tabernacle of this world, to fly away from the prison of this life and reign most righteously with Lord." He excluded the claims of the Eastern Court as he assumed the title of 'Romanorum Imperator' instead of simple 'Imperator' of his predecessors.

*His love of
Byzantine
etiquette and
manners*

*Romanorum
Imperator*

For a close union of the Pope and the Emperor in the theocratic and cosmopolitan imperialism of Otto's concept, an institution of seven professional ecclesiastics—the *judices palatii ordinarii*—was founded. The seven ecclesiastics were to ordain—a substitution of the coronation ceremony—the Emperor and

*His cosmo-
politan
imperialism*

Concept of a personal harmony between Emperor and the Pope to elect the Pope. Apart from the fantastic character of such a concept Otto's whole policy was entirely dependent on a personal harmony between the Emperor and the Pope and this could only be secured by the subordination of the real interest of the empire in the pursuit of his brilliant but illusive fancies.

His coronation (996) **7/ Application of Otto III's Policy : Its Success and Failure :** Let us now examine the extent to which Otto's policy proved successful. In 996, upon his attainment of legal majority (15 years) Otto III crossed the Alps to claim the imperial crown. On his way, in Lombardy, he was waited upon by a deputation of the Romans who having been tired of the high-handedness of J. Crescentius, begged him to appoint a new Pope. Otto appointed his cousin Bruno, a youth of 24, a zealous champion of Cluniac reforms, as the Pope. Bruno took the name of Pope Gregory V and coronated Otto III on the 25th of May, 996, as the Emperor.

Appointment of Bruno The appointment of Bruno as Pope was a very welcome step in the application of the theories of Otto as well as of the Pope's. The new Pope compelled the French clergy to submit to him and censured king Robert of France for his marriage within the prohibited degree. Gerbert of Aurillac was forced to yield his post to the worldly Arnulf. The holy Adalbert, the apostle of Bohemia, was peremptorily ordered either to return to his bishopric wherefrom he had been driven out by a heathen reaction or to engage in a new mission to the heathens. Adalbert chose the second course and died as a martyr to the cause of Gregory V and Otto III, in hands of the Prussian pagans. It is needless to mention here that in all this the Pope and the Emperor worked with a unity of purpose in their attempt to effect a regeneration of the Universe.

Crescentius put down But all was not well with the imperial city of Rome. A revolt broke out in Rome which brought

back Crescentius. Otto could win the imperial city with the help of the iron soldiery of Eckhard of Meissen. Crescentius was finally put down and sent to the gallows.

The early death of Gregory V offered Otto another scope for appointing another Pope. He raised Gerbert of Aurillac to the papal throne. Thus like Charlemagne, Otto III also appointed two popes. Gerbert took the name of Sylvester II under whom the close union between the Emperor and the Pope continued as during the life time of Gregory V.

*Appointment
and re-
appointment
of Popes*

But Otto's policy of the adoption of Byzantine customs and his policy of cosmopolitan imperialism in general, soon alienated the German dukes and specially the German church. Otto's action in setting up a new archbishopric at Gnesen as well as Pope Sylvester's recognition of the Christian duke of Hungary as king were nothing short of the recognition of the national independence of Poland and Hungary. But whatever might have been the wisdom of such a policy, it was contrary to the traditional Saxon policy of extending the German influence eastwards. "The practical German bishops saw with disgust the Emperor giving up the very corner-stone of the policy of Henry and Otto I" Otto III followed up his father's policy of drawing Italy and Germany together by giving the Chancellorship of both countries to the same churchman, by maintaining a strong force of Germans in Italy and by taking his Italian retinue with him through the Trans-Alpine lands. All this was resented by the German bishops in particular. Their discontent assumed the proportion of an open revolt over the consecration of a new church for the nuns. The Pope supported Bernard but the German bishops declared for Willegis of Mainz, in the controversy relating to the consecration. The German bishops cared not for the papal censures, nor did they care to be present in the council in which Sylvester

*Otto III's
policy
alienated the
German
dukes and
churchmen*

*Corner-stone
of Henry and
Otto I's
policy
given up*

*German
bishops in
open revolt*

proposed to condemn Willegis of Mainz. Thus the German bishops who were also the leaders of the German nation, were in open revolt. And Bryce remarks "It is reasonable to suppose that whatever power he might have gained in the south, he would have lost in the north. Dwelling rarely in Germany, and in sympathies more a southern than a Teuton, he reigned over the fierce barons with no such tight hand as his grandfather had been wont to do; he displeased the Germans by favouring the claim which the Pope advanced to control their prelates, he neglected the schemes of northern conquests; he released the Polish monarch from the obligation of a tribute and relaxed the hold of Germany on Hungary."

*Rome in
revolt*

While Germany presented such a gloomy outlook, Italy showed no better prospects to the Emperor and the Pope. Affairs in Italy forced Otto to return from Germany where he had been to appease the general opposition to his policy. Before his last descent to Italy, he descended as the story goes, into the tomb of Charlemagne at Aachen, perhaps to obtain the blessings of the great founder of the Holy Roman Empire. He found south Italy in revolt; his feverish efforts to restore his authority, his frantic appeal for Byzantine help went in vain. Soon Rome also revolted. In despair he repaired to the hermitage of holy Romuald in the swamps of Ravenna and there, after practising penance, mortification and scourging, recovered his energy. He now attempted to raise from Germany an army for the subjugation of Italy, but no German help was forthcoming. At the moment of the collapse of all his plans a sharp fever attacked him and cut him off in the prime of his life.

*Otto III's
death*

8/ Policy of Ottos Disastrous for both Germany and Italy : Despite Barraclough's justification for the Italian policy of Otto I

(see pp. 172-173) the fact remained that whatever advantages Germany had derived from Otto's imperial policy proved transient and left an illusory ideal to his successors to subserve without profit to Germany. (i) The Italo-German union effected by Otto I rested in reality upon force and, as such, however much the Italians might acknowledge the claims of the German emperors, the latter had always to fight their way to Italy for coronation, spend energies which were urgently needed at home, in keeping their dominions beyond the Alps. This was the inherent weakness of the revived empire. Naturally enough, for the German Emperors, a German sentiment and a national outlook would only be helpful in keeping a rather unwilling Italy under control. But unfortunately, of the first three Ottos, Otto III was least German. He was cosmopolitan in his outlook; no wonder German interests occupied a secondary position in his policy.

*Italian
policy—of
transient
advantage
Italo-German
union rested
on force :
hence weak*

(ii) Further, the imperial policy ever since Otto I's time, was one of greater dependence on the papacy. The danger of such a policy would only be manifest when the emperor was not very strong. Otto III although had appointed two Popes, one his cousin and the other his teacher, yet in his attempt to harmonize the Pope and the emperor in his idyllic empire, he made the Pope considerably strong. He did not realise that in carrying on with a policy of connivance at the growth of the papal power, he was only betraying his own interests.

*Great
dependence
on the papacy*

The influence of the Church on Otto III ever since his boyhood had a lasting effect. His belief in the sacredness of the empire, his notions about the millennial era and above all his mystic and visionary scheme of founding a World Empire with Rome as its seat made Otto only play the game of the papacy. The success of Otto's cosmopolitan imperialism depended on the concord of the papacy and the empire, and necessitated the reform of the papacy.

*Abiding
influence of
the Church
on Otto III*

*Reform of
the clergy*

Appointment of Bruno, his cousin, an enthusiastic Cluniac, initiated the reform of the papacy. The substitution of men like Bruno and Gerbert, the former a man of piety and the latter a 'marvel of science and learning' to the contemporaries, for the profligate priests of Italy "began that Teutonic reform of the papacy which raised it from the abyss of the tenth century to the point where Hilderbrand found it." His policy of supporting the papacy or at least conniving at their exercise of unprecedented powers, alienated the German clergy upon whom his predecessors depended so much and in whom lay the real strength of the Saxon Emperors as against Italy. Pope Sylvester II's appointment of the bishop of Hildesheim to the convent of Gandersheim, in preference to Willegis, Archbishop of Mainz, with the support of Otto III, was a great matter of dissatisfaction to the German clergy. Thus by gradual steps Otto had forfeited the support of the German clergy.

*Otto's
absentee
kings in
Germany*

(iii) In the third place, Otto's visionary scheme of founding a world empire with its seat at Rome made him an absentee king so far as Germany was concerned. This naturally, enhanced the ducal power which Otto I took so much pains to curtail. Otto in giving shape to the thoroughly impracticable ideals that he held so dear, overlooked the most vital fact that his real strength lay in his maintaining a strong hold upon the German dukes and the nobles. The result was that the German dukes and the nobles who were naturally refractory utilised his absence to their best advantage and Otto III had to remain a wanderer from Italy to Germany and vice versa throughout his lifetime. Germany, the very base of Otto's strength fell into confusion and withdrew her obedience to him.

*Policy of
expansion
forsaken*

(iv) In the fourth place, Otto III forsook the policy of extension towards the north which was so ably followed by his predecessors. He displeased Germany by abandoning this policy and by releasing

the Polish monarch from the obligation of tribute and by endorsing the recognition of Stephen, the first Christian duke of Hungary, as king by Sylvester II. "These acts involved a recognition of national independence of Poland and Hungary. These steps were probably wise from the point of view of the 'Commonwealth' which was Otto's attempt to re-

*Ideal of
Common-
wealth
resented by
the Germans*

(v) Fifthly, Otto III's determination to recognise 'no law but Roman', his craze for Byzantine honours and titles and above all, his appointment of the same churchman to the Chancellorship of both Italy and Germany, gave offence to many of his German followers. His imperial theory diminished the importance of Germany in his empire.

*Craze for
Roman law
and Byzan-
tine honours*

Thus Otto III failed to recognise the importance of Germany, the main source of his power, and in his effort to rashly translate into practice his illusive imperial schemes wherein there was to be a union of the Emperor and the Pope, he alienated both the nobility and the clergy of Germany and specially of Saxony, his native place. His neglect of Germany and German interests gave rise to intense resentment which found expression in the revolt that broke out in Germany and the ultimate refusal of the Germans to help Otto while the latter appealed for help to bring Italy to obedience.

*Failure to
recognise the
importance of
Germany and
Saxony*

If Otto III's policy was disastrous to Germany, it was none the less so far as Italy was concerned. Italian kingdom was in the process of dissolution. Otto's unpractical idealism left Italy no better than

*Unpractical
idealism left
both Germany
and Italy
equally in
dissolution*

Germany. Compelled to cross and re-cross the Alps, Otto could serve neither Italy nor Germany. In Italy the Tuscan noble and the Crescentii were disputing the mastery of Rome as well as of the Papacy. In the north, marquis of Ivera who twice rebelled and assumed the title of king during Otto's lifetime was to assume the crown of Italy as soon Otto was dead. Otto III left Italy exactly in the same position wherefrom Otto I had rescued her. In the illusion of devotion and power Otto III lost his grasp over the realities of life and the force of his government was weakened abroad. He overlooked the political aspect of the empire.

*His policy
disastrous
both for
Germany
and Italy*

Thus both from the Germanic and Italian points of view the rule of Otto III was but disastrous. Even during his lifetime and particularly after his death the Slavs and the Danes began fresh invasions, the Hungarians organised a kingdom and ceased to pay tribute, the Popes became independent, even Italy was thoroughly disturbed by the claims of the Lombards to the Crown. "Much wretchedness was, therefore, hidden under the brilliant appearance of a close union of the Empire and the Papacy." "The tendency of his policy like the latter Carolings' was to subordinate the visionary empire to the practical papacy, thus exactly reversing ideas of the great Saxons; and bringing out in its most glaring contrast the incompatibility of the union of the German kingship with the imperial claims to universal domination."

*Opinion of
Thatcher and
Schwill*

9/ Otto III's Subordination of the Imperial Interests to the Papacy : Otto III's policy was most disastrous not only for Germany but also for the imperial power. Thatcher and Schwill rightly point out: "He neglected Germany, and his reign, was, for the imperial power, as for Germany itself, a most disastrous one." We have already noted how and to what extent he had brought the Papacy to

overshadow the empire and had betrayed the imperial interests to the practical papacy.

Although Otto III's policy left the Papacy stronger than ever, yet it will be unfair to put all the responsibility of the betrayal of the imperial interests to the Papacy, on the shoulders of Otto III alone. The process had begun under Otto I. True that Otto I exercised a great control over the Papacy. He had deposed John XII and appointed a lay man to the Papal chair as Leo VIII and restored him to his position when during his absence John XII had driven him out. He enslaved the Papacy no doubt, but at the same time he paved the way for its future greatness. Otto I was, in a way, responsible for the eventual ruin of the empire. He depended on the clergy in dealing with the insubordination of the hereditary feudal lords and landowners. Otto I played the churchmen off against the dukes and the nobles. "He made the bishops his chief secular agents and most trustworthy vassals. Secular powers, functions and immunities were heaped on them and soon they grew as powerful as any lay magnate." "The royal authority in the town and its adjacent countryside was delegated to the bishop, who was given committal powers. So we find that in the earliest royal charters to the towns in Germany, the grant is actually made to the bishop as governor of the town." Under him the bishops exercised their ecclesiastical authority by king's grant. Thus the church was placed under the peculiar circumstance of serving two masters—the Emperor and the Pope. In such a context any church movement was bound to be one for the freedom of the church from the secular authority and in a possible conflict between the empire and the Papacy the clergy was bound to be on the side of the Papacy. Thus Otto I gave the Church 'the means to spread its influence and opportunity to cure its own ailments.'

*Otto III
alone not to
be blamed*

*Otto I's res-
ponsibility*

*Church
served two
masters :
Emperor and
the Pope*

*Idea of
getting crown
from Pope's
hands*

Further, the conviction that had gained ground under Otto I, that the imperial crown was only to be won from the Pope's hands at Rome, made the Emperors perpetually somewhat dependent on the Pope's favour and allowed the formation of the most fantastic and far-reaching Papal claims and pretensions. Not only this, Otto I while forming a new ecclesiastical province to embrace the newly conquered territories obtained the Papal authorisation in 967 to create the Archbishopric of Magdeburg. He had also supported the clerical movement for founding new bishoprics at Brandenburg, Merseburg, Meissen and elsewhere.

*Unconscious
betrayal of
imperial
interest*

Thus by these steps Otto I began the process of the unconscious betrayal of the imperial interests to the Papacy. Otto II like his father had supported the missionary activities of the church. He founded the bishoprics of Gnesen in Poland and Prague in Bohemia, the former under the Archbishopric of Magdeburg and the latter under the Archbishopric of Mainz. His other act which indirectly helped the Papacy was his determination to carry on Crusade against the Saracens at whose hand he was defeated earlier at Calabria. The decision was taken in the Diet at Verona in 983. The Crusade, originally, was more religious in its character than political or economic. Thus Otto II was indirectly playing the game of the Papacy. The recognition of Otto III a minor, of 3 years, son of Otto II, as the latter's successor by the Diet of Verona was also an inconvenient precedent, particularly, because of the fact that the Diet of Verona consisted of Italian and German nobles, many of whom represented dual character—clergy-cum-nobility.

*Otto III
completed
subordination
of imperial
interests to
the papacy*

The process of subordination of the imperial interests to the Papacy was completed by Otto III through his rash, unpractical, illusory ideal of a World Monarchy with its seat at Rome and based on a union of the Emperor and the Pope.

By upbringing and education, Otto III was highly religious. Brought up by his intensely pious mother and grandmother, aided and advised by Archbishops, Otto was imbued with an idea of sacredness of the empire. His teacher, Gerbert of Aurillac who was the marvel of the age, due to his wide range of learning, instilled in him the vision of a World Empire based on the union of the Emperor and the Pope. The influence of the clerical atmosphere in which he had grown up, coupled with his mystic nature, made Otto III a believer in an unreal and illusory ideal of a cosmopolitan imperialism. Realisation of Otto's ideal depended on the concord of the empire and the Papacy. He founded an institution of seven professional ecclesiastical persons to ordain the Emperor and to elect the Pope. In seeking to effect a personal harmony between the Pope and the Emperor, Otto had necessarily to subordinate his real interests to the Papacy.

*Otto's
religiocity*

Otto's cosmopolitan imperialism led him to set up a new Archbishopric at Gnesen. He also allowed Pope Sylvester to recognise Stephen of Hungary as king and to establish an Archbishopric at Gran. These steps while made Poland and Hungary independent increased the power of the Papacy, for Otto was thereby enhancing the strength of the Papacy at his own cost. Not only this, high claims of the Papacy over the kings were now made by Pope Sylvester over Robert II, king of France.

*His cos-
mopolitan
imperialism*

Further, Sylvester had a great influence over Otto III and from him Otto acquired a zeal for missionary work to increase his Christian empire by conversion. He became an admirer of the new monastic reformers such as St. Nilus in Southern Italy and St. Romuald near Ravenna and St. Adelbert.

*Otto III's
zeal for
missionary
work*

Otto III made two Papal appointments. He appointed his cousin Bruno as Gregory V in 996; Bruno was an enthusiastic reformer. On the premature

*Substitution
of profligate
Popes with
men like
Bruno and
Sylvester
purified the
church—
disinterested
acts worked
imperial ruin*

*Barraclough's
view*

*Otto III's
policy result
of changed
context*

death of Bruno Otto appointed his teacher Gerbert as Pope Sylvester II. He was called Sylvester as the name recalled the traditional association of Sylvester I with Constantine. "Otto's ambition was to realise the dream of a resurrected Roman empire under the joint guidance of himself and Sylvester II as Pope of a reformed Church." This spirit of reform that Otto III had breathed into the lax Papacy, this substitution of the profligate Papacy and Priesthood by men like Bruno and Sylvester marked the beginning of "that Teutonic reform of the Papacy which raised it from the abyss of the tenth century to the point where Hilderbrand found it." Without this the later success of Hilderbrand would have been impossible. It was one of the reasons of the weakening of the imperial power over the Pope and the church which marked the close of the eleventh century. "The emperors were working the ruin of their power by their most disinterested acts."

Barraclough, however, points out that a judicious appreciation of the imperial policy of Otto III is very necessary to understand whether the imperial policy of Otto III was really an unhealthy pre-occupation with Italian affairs 'of chimerical ambitions which conflicted root and branch with the native aspirations and fundamental interests of the German people'. He is of the opinion that it was a mistake 'to attribute to the Greek blood flowing in Otto III's veins the differences discernible and that of Otto I'. Differences were there, Barraclough agrees, but they arose from changing social and historical circumstances, necessitating a revision of policy; while the weakening of imperial control in Italy in the eleventh century was a consequence not of Otto III's policy but of the failure on the part of his successors to maintain that policy. Despite many arguments and controversies in the matter of attempting a balance-sheet for and against the imperial policy of Otto III and for the matter of that of the

German imperial rulers, there would be no profit if the matter is considered by taking it out of its historical context without regard to changing personalities or changing content of the imperial idea.

10/ Henry II (1002-24) : The death of Otto III ended a reign that was as disastrous for Germany as for the imperial power. It also extinguished the male line of Otto the Great. After a short civil war and much negotiations Henry II, Duke of Bavaria, grandson of Henry the Fowler, thus a second cousin of Otto III, ascended the throne. Although the Franks and the Saxons accepted Henry II, Italy was not bound by their acts. Neither the empire nor the Lombard kingdom could yet be claimed as of right by the German king. Italian princes placed Ardoïn on the vacant throne of Pavia. But Ardoïn's selfishness soon had overthrown him. A party of the nobles, supported by the Pope invited Henry who had already reached Italy to claim his crown. Henry's strong army made opposition hopeless and Henry was crowned Emperor by Pope Benedict on February 14, 1014 in St. Peter's. Henry II ensured the continuance of the empire and alliance with the Papacy. But his return to Germany left his work in Lombardy half-done. Ardoïn reappeared with his supporters but Bishop Leo along with other bishops resisted him. Ardoïn repaired to a monastery where he died (1015).

*Extinction
of Otto's
male line :
Henry
Fowler's
grandson
Henry II
king*

*Henry II
ensured
continuance
of the empire
and alliance
with papacy*

Henry crossed over to Italy for the third time in 1021 when he succeeded in exacting fealty from the Lombard princes. He then set himself to the task of church reform. Henry was active, persevering, pious and virtuous. But his health was poor. The church affairs held a very important place in his mind. But he did not, however, neglect the secular side. In contradistinction to the policy of Otto III, Henry II made Germany his chief care. From the church he demanded unswerving support and insisted on his

*Henry II
made
Germany his
chief care*

right to nominate the bishops. He made lavish grants of land and jurisdiction to the bishops who became more than ever-indispensable servants of the crown. By subduing the recalcitrants and bringing parts of the empire that were lost to the empire at his accession, Henry revived largely the falling authority of the Emperor. His failing health did not permit him long years of life. He died in 1024 and his unfinished work was taken up by his successors.

*Took up
Henry II's
unfinished
work*

*Laid
foundation
for prosperous
reign of his
son Henry
III*

11/ Conrad II (1024-39) : On Henry II's death, Conrad II, Duke of Franconia ascended the throne. He took up the unfinished work of Henry II. He increased the royal domain and authority in every possible way. The last king of Burgundy had bequeathed his kingdom to Conrad II, which made him the king of Burgundy. He also held the duchies in Germany either himself or gave them to the members of his family. He also took measures, like William of Normandy, calling upon his subjects to render military service to him directly. But at the same time he earned the gratitude of all subvassals by decreasing their hereditary estates, and by forbidding eviction by great lords without sufficient cause. "By increasing the territory of the empire and strengthening the boundaries, by attaching the smaller nobles to himself and getting full possession of duchies, Conrad II laid the foundation for the prosperous reign of his son Henry III."

*Succession
without
opposition*

12/ Henry III (1039-56) : Conrad II's practical ability and sound policy made the German monarchy so strong that his son Henry III succeeded him without opposition. No other German sovereign had so few difficulties to combat as to find such ready acceptance of his authority.

Education

Henry III received an excellent education under the care of his mother Gisela. Henry was placed under the best of literary teachers of the time, while his

father took care that he should excel in all Knightly exercises and go through a sound training in military drills and war, law and statecraft. Thus in body and mind he was excellently trained up for his post.

He had also a valuable experience of warfare and government. If not formally, yet virtually he was functioning as a co-regent of his father. He had already been crowned king of Germany and Burgandy, and already Duke of Bavaria and Swabia. He had shared the glory of defeating the Poles and the Hungarians with his father. Then by education and experience he was, eminently suited to take up his father's work; but he breathed a new spirit into the old forms. *His exploits*

Henry III, no doubt had inherited the practical wisdom of his father, but he rose far above his father's cold self-seeking and utter selfishness. His aims were: (1) to be an absolute master of his dominion, (2) to realise the great ideal of the Holy Roman Empire without the fantastic or illusory concept of Otto III's mind, (3) to reform the church. *His aims*

Henry III was distinguished for his piety, and his deep interest lay in the spiritual welfare of the church which was all the more accentuated by his pious wife Agnes, daughter of William V of Aquitaine. *His piety*

The greatness of Henry III was illustrated to the world by the rapid success that he gained against Poland, Bohemia and Hungary which were reduced to suzerainty of the empire. *His exploits*

(a) The internal weakness of Poland due to civil strife made matter easy for Henry III. *Poland*

(b) Bohemia was, however, a hard nut to crack. Bretislav, duke of Bohemia, was ambitious. He wanted to make himself the national leader of the Bohemians as well as to make the Bishopric at Prague an independent Archbishopric as a natural corollary to his assumption of kingly title. Henry *Bohemia*

marched against Bretislav, Duke of Bohemia, threatened Prague and compelled him to surrender and acknowledge the suzerainty of Henry III (1041).

Hungary

(c) But this was not the end of the trouble. Hungary, which was even more formidable than Bohemia was yet to be reduced. There had been of late a heathen reaction in Hungary and the whole land had relapsed into heathenism. They even placed Aba on the throne. For two years Henry had been engaged in subduing Aba and as a result of three campaigns (the last in 1044), Henry finally succeeded in destroying the power of Aba. His successor Peter acknowledged the suzerainty of the German king. In the following year (1045) Henry III visited Hungary and received the submission of Magyar magnates. But in Hungary, Henry III's power was not strong. Four years later Andrew, a relative of Aba dethroned Peter and seized the throne for himself. This weakened the position of Henry in respect of Hungary, but all the same, Andrew did not dare to break openly with Henry. Thus "with a row of vassal kingdoms extending to the extremest eastward limits of Roman civilisation, the Holy Roman Empire was fast becoming in a very real sense the mistress of the world."

*His policy
towards
France*

(d) If Henry was successful in the east, he could not hope, to be so in the west. The early Capetians were too weak to trouble Germany. The Capetian kings were constantly at war with their feudatories and the latter also among themselves. But all the same the Capetian France was still the centre of a great system and any attempt against it would have united the whole of France against the enemy. Henry III, therefore, very wisely followed a friendly policy with France. On the death of his first wife in 1038, he married Agnes, daughter of William V of Aquitaine. This while strengthened the friendly relations with France, won Henry III's support for the Cluniac movement.

(e) Thus within a few years of his accession Henry strengthened his position both towards the east and the west. He turned his attention towards Germany itself. In spite of the best efforts of Conrad II, Germany was in turmoil. Conrad had played the smaller nobles against the dukes and this gave rise to widespread private wars. Henry III at once (i) by his Diet at Constance "solemnly forgave all his enemies and craved their forgiveness in turn, calling upon the magnates to follow his example and lay aside their feuds with each other." He further (ii) conciliated the Dukes by partly abandoning his father's policy at concentrating all duchies into his own hands. (iii) He also kept certain duchies vacant or filled them with his own relatives of Swabia and Franconia for some years. There the newly set-up dukes became his faithful ministers and not champions of local independence.

*Diet at
Constance*

(f) Henry III next turned his attentions towards Italy. His predecessors Henry II or Conrad II had not interfered in papal election; Conrad II kept himself aloof from the Roman politics. Conrad remained content with using the Pope as his instrument and was not concerned as to his character. Conditions in Rome in the mean time deteriorated so much so that all earnest Christians were shocked. A disgraceful contest among the three clients to the papal chair shocked even the most reckless apathy of Italy, as Bryce puts it. Pope Benedict IX, a member of Tusculan house was living a dissolute life and in 1044, the family of Crescentius, a rival house to the crown of Tusculum, set up anti-Pope Sylvester III. Family influences still upheld Benedict IX but with the rise of new troubles, according to some, due to his willingness to marry, being tired of a clerical life, he sold his post to a new pretender called George VI. Thus there were three claimants, Benedict IX, Sylvester III and Gregory VI, to the papal chair.

*Henry III's
Italian
policy*

*Henry III's
Italian policy
determined
by his policy
towards
Papacy*

Henry III's Italian policy was determined by his attitude towards the papacy. The influence of Agnes had won Henry's support to the Cluniac reforms. Henry being alive to the scandals which disgraced the Roman church, sought to reform the church, and it could be done in a complete fashion, if it was started from the head of the church. Henry took upon himself the task of unravelling the papal tangle and reforms of the papacy.

*Synod at
Pavia*

(1) The first action of Henry III on reaching Italy was prelude to what was to come. In 1046, he summoned a synod at Pavia which passed decrees specially condemning *simony*.

*Synod at
Sutri*

(2) In the same year, Henry summoned another synod at Sutri near Rome, which deposed the simoniacal Pope Gregory VI and Sylvester who was an intruder.

*Synod at
Rome*

(3) A third synod was held at Rome itself and Benedict IX who had little claim after he had sold his office, was deposed. Suidgar, bishop of Bamberg was chosen pope by Henry III, who took the name of Clement II. On the Christmas day, 1046, Clement II was enthroned, who in his turn crowned Henry III and Agnes.

*Henry
granted
special
powers*

(4) A Roman synod granted Henry the right of nominating the supreme pontiff and the corrupt and simoniacal Roman priesthood had to receive German after German as their Popes 'at the bidding of a ruler, so powerful, severe and so pious.' Pope Clement II died in 1048, Henry appointed bishop of Brixen as Pope Damasus II who also died after a few weeks. His successor was Henry's kinsman Bruno who took the name of Pope Leo IX (1048-54). On Leo IX's death, Henry III appointed Victor II as Pope (1054-57). Never had the church been so completely subservient to the state. Henry stood at the summit of power; after half a century of aloofness the king of Germany had again intervened in a

papal election and rescued the papacy from degradation and from the control of Roman nobles. The prestige of the papacy also was thus restored.

(5) In south Italy Henry recognised the Norman Drogo as count of Apulia and Ranulf of Aversa. His supremacy was acknowledged which meant the overlordship of the western emperor. They, however, enjoyed practical independence except on the rare occasion of an imperial visit. It must, however, be noted that Henry III had to hasten back to Germany at one time to put down the trouble that broke out in the lower Rhine and at another to put down the rebellion of Bavaria. These proved the insecurity of Henry III's position in Germany, although Italy remained quiet during his absence. Henry now sought to conciliate his German foes. But unfortunately Henry III died too soon and was out in the midst of his extraordinarily successful career. The last important thing he did was to secure succession to his son. He died at the early age of 30.

*Henry III's
position in
Germany
insecure*

13/Henry III's Strength and Weakness :

Such were the activities of Henry III. His varied activities and unquestioned obedience that he commanded of both Germany and Italy show that after a lapse of half a century the German king was resuming his power in Italy. (a) He secured the eastern part of his empire by making a row of his vassals. (b) The greatness of Henry III was illustrated to the world by the rapid success that he gained against Poland, Bohemia and Hungary which were reduced to suzerainty of Emperors. Thus with a row of vassal kingdoms extending to the extremest eastward limits of the Roman civilisation, the Holy Roman Empire was fast becoming in a very real sense the mistress of the world. If Henry was successful in the east he strengthened his position to the west by entering into a friendly relations with

*Strength :
In Germany*

France. (c) Under him Germany was almost welded into a national unity. (i) By the Council of Constance and his strong government he did much to diminish private warfare within Germany. (ii) Under him an efficient political organisation was built up. (d) German monarchy assumed a new prestige and was recognised as supreme over the neighbouring Slav-states. (e) The German dukes became faithful ministers rather than champion of local independence under him. (f) The German clergy became subservient to the royal wishes. Thus he gave Germany strong frontiers, internal peace and unity, and a strong government.

In Italy

In Italy his power was more unprecedented: (i) He extricated the papacy out of the corruption and immorality into which it had fallen. He deposed Simony in his synod at Pavia. (ii) He made and unmade popes and treated them as subjects who owed him obedience. (iii) No bishop could enter into his office until he had taken an oath of allegiance and had been invested by him with the episcopal lands. (iv) The Pope had no part either in his election or his investiture or induction into office. If we combine all these proofs of authority with those of his domestic authority, "we must consider him (Henry III) as the most absolute monarch in the history of Germany." Even in Rome no German sovereign had ever been so absolute. (v) He appointed German after German as popes and became patrician with power to nominate the Pope. (vi) He raised the moral tone of the papacy and restored it to the prestige where from it had fallen due to the immoral and simoniacal conduct of the papacy. (vii) He supported the Cluniac movement for the reform of the church. He was at once strong and pious in his attitude towards the church. (viii) In south Italy he recognised Norman Drogo and Ranulf of Aversa as dukes, and (ix) his supremacy was recognised in south Italy. (x) He did not

forget the essential German character of his position and did not entertain any illusory ideas of Otto. (xi) Under him "Germany effectively ruled the destinies of the world." (xii) For the third time under him the Emperor and the Pope worked for the good of the world. (xiii) His ideal of the Holy Roman Empire was practical enough to be realised. (xiv) Lastly, he secured smooth succession to his son.

In his reign as Bryce says "the empire attained the meridian of its power." "Under him the mediæval empire attained its apogee." Indeed the imperial power restored by the Ottos reached its highest peak during the Middle Ages under Henry III. Until then it had steadily increased although with occasional back-tidings. Under Henry an efficient political organisation was built, a love of learning and art was developed. Henry's political power in Rome was most effective. The net results of his rule were: Germany became almost a nation, the papacy reformed, and the church purified.

*Empire
attained its
apogee under
Henry III*

But all the same it must be noted that under the splendour of the empire and imperial strength, were hidden its dark spots. The next point from the meridian was necessarily a point of decline.

Weakness:

First, Henry's encroachments alarmed his own nobles no less than the priesthood, and the reaction which might have been dangerous to himself proved fatal to his son. Risings of rebellions in the lower Rhine and in Bavaria during the lifetime of Henry III were indications of the insecurity of his positions. "What he bequeathed to his son was a Germany scething with discontent, a nobility on the point of rebellion, and in Italy the papacy under the thumb of the reforming Hilderbrand and his allies."

In Germany

Secondly, his church policy influenced by his pious wife Agnes proved ruinous to the empire. He was the most important of the German kings after Otto I in respect of the authority over the papacy.

Re: Papacy

But there was a fundamental difference between the church policy of Otto I and Henry. Henry III's purpose was not so much to make papacy subordinate to himself as to render it fit to undertake the headship of the church in the work of ecclesiastical reform. His support to the Cluniac reform and his attempt at reforming the papacy were in fact, so successful, that the papacy did not lose its prestige given to it by Henry. On the contrary its advance was so continuous from this moment that eventually it overthrew the very power that raised it up.

*His lack of
foresight*

Thirdly, Henry III permitted Pope Leo IX to act with great authority. It was Pope Leo IX who first saw disadvantages of the lay investiture, and in the synod of Rheims (1049) he asserted the rights of Pope to invest with insignia of clerical office although he dared not to enforce the right. Henry III's mistake lay in the fact that he did not foresee that the papacy would or could make claims which would conflict with his own interests and power. He did not see that the investiture contest was just brewing up and the beginning had been made by Leo IX in 1049. Gradually the papal theory was working out into logical conclusions.

*Religion
allowed to
blind
political
wisdom*

Lastly, although Henry III seems to have been hard-headed, he was a capable ruler much above the mystic enthusiast like Otto III, yet he allowed himself to be swayed by religious consideration to such an extent that political expediency was subordinated to religion. He reverted to the Ottonian policy of generosity to the bishops making them his advisers and administrators, and thereby earned the hostility of the German dukes and priesthood and at the moment of his death, left the German monarchy threatened by a possible union of the rebellious German nobility, with the reforming and self-relying papacy. "Henry III prepared fifty years of calamity for his son."

History of the Church : Growth of the Papacy

THE INITIAL TWO HUNDRED YEARS of the existence of the Church was a period of its loose and haphazard organisation. Bishops were mutually independent, although the tendency was towards closer union. The imperial organisation of Rome was gradually being copied almost unconsciously by the Church. Gradually the Church hierarchy became a replica of the imperial organisation with the Pope at the head, archbishops, bishops, abbots, etc., in a descending order and with comparatively small area under control.

*Church
hierarchy
replica of
imperial
organisation*

The position of the Pope—the Bishop of Rome, as the head of the Church was due to the claim, and the general belief among the Christian community and the medieval scholars, that Pope was the *vicar* of St. Peter. The Lord (Jesus) said: “Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose in earth shall be loosed in heaven.” The Bishop of Rome, that is the Pope, as vicar of St. Peter was regarded as having inherited the divine commission and therefore marked off as the successor of St. Peter from the other holders of apostolic *Sees*. The medieval theologians and scholars believed that St. Peter was the direct vicar of God on earth and the Bishop of Rome was St. Peter’s vicar and in that capacity was the head of the entire church. St. Peter and St. Paul, both had preached in Rome. None of the patriarchates, *i.e.* heads of the church, could claim this direct and double link and, therefore, the Bishop of Rome was the inheritor of the divine commission from St. Peter.

*Pope-vicar
of St. Peter*

*Growth of
spiritual
authority of
the Roman
Pope*

The growth of the spiritual authority of the Roman Pope was very much due to the importance of Rome, the capital of the empire. It seemed natural that the Pope at Rome should be the first bishop in the world. Analogy between the Emperor and the Pope was naturally drawn. Missionary work in the west and in the continent was carried on by the Pope.

*Boniface
brought
Germany
under Roman
Church*

It was, however, under bishop Boniface, a west Saxon, that the church was organised among all the Germans. It was ever since that time the Roman Pope had come to regard Germany as a part of his diocese. Boniface received great support from Charles Martel and after him from Pipin. In 743 Boniface was made the archbishop of Mainz. It goes to the credit of Boniface to have made Germany Christian and placed it under Rome. From the German Church Christianity now began to spread among the remaining German tribes such as Saxons, Danes, Scandinavians, and to the Slavic people east of the Elbe.

*Growth of
temporal
power*

The growth of temporal power of the papacy began with Constantine's ever-increasing amount of civil power that he invested them with. The bishops acted as judges, as guardians of morals, they had a share in the government of cities and would enjoy immunity from magisterial authority. To these the Pope added still more powers and became easily the most important man in Rome. It may be cited as an illustration that in the wake of the Iconoclastic movement that had begun from the Byzantine court, when Emperor Leo III forbade use of images in the Church, Pope Gregory II replied that "it was not the Emperor, but the bishop of Rome who had authority over the beliefs and practices of the Church." Pope Gregory III went to the extent of putting the Emperor under a ban.

The origin of the Papal state has to be traced

to the Lombard attack. The Pope requested intervention of Pipin who made two campaigns into Italy and compelled the Lombards to cede to the Pope a strip of territory which lay to the south of Lombardy. This was the beginning of the temporal sovereignty of the Papacy. He was freed from the eastern Emperor, and recognised as the political as well as the ecclesiastical ruler of Rome and its surrounding territory, under the overlordship of Pipin, who had the title of *Patricius*.

*Beginning
of temporal
power of
the Papacy:
Pipin made
Patricius*

It is necessary to mention here that with the founding of Constantinople with a Patriarch there, the eastern church arose. The western church and particularly the Pope of Rome looked upon the Patriarch as an upstart. In the meantime towards the end of the fifth century (476) when the western Roman empire was broken up by the invading barbarians, the Roman Pope remained as the symbol of unity of the western church. The eastern church as well as the eastern empire continued to exist. Although the west Roman empire was broken up, legally the area still belonged to the eastern Emperor who was a scion of the Roman imperial house. But barring this legal fiction of an authority, never exercised, the east Roman empire did nothing to save the Pope from external attack. In the neighbourhood again there arose a mighty conqueror Charles the Great who was destined to wrest the imperial crown of the west. Pope Leo who had reasons to be disgruntled due to lack of support from the eastern Emperor, and who had to request Charles' help in dire necessity, paid back his gratitude to Charles by coronating him Emperor of the west on the Christmas day of 800 A.D. when Charles went to reinstate Leo in his Papal chair wherefrom he had been driven out by a faction. In 800 A.D. therefore, the Pope had taken the final step in his revolt from the eastern Empire by crowning Charles the Great as the Emperor.

*Roman Pope
symbol of
unity*

Undefined nature of Charles' coronation led to later preposterous claims by the Church

Roman laws adapted to canonical laws

Under Charles the Great, the papacy was occupying a subordinate position to the emperor. But the undefined nature of Charles' coronation and crowning of successive emperors by the popes later on led to preposterous claims by the papacy on the emperor and the empire.

Roman laws were adapted to the canonical laws and a medieval theory of the church was put forth. According to this theory, as in the case of an individual the soul is more important than the body, and whereas the soul remains even after the body perishes, it is the soul that matters. It is for the protection of the soul that there is the need of the body. Likewise the church which deals with the soul is more important than the state which is nothing but the outward cover of the soul, *i.e.* the church. If the soul dies, body is useless, but if the body dies, the soul remains. It is from this theory of the relationship of the body and the soul that the medieval theory of the church was built. It goes without saying that the church which deals with matters spiritual must control the state which controls only the matters temporal.

Personal influence of Leo I, Gregory I, II, III, Nicholas I strengthened claims of the Church on temporal authority

Purification of the Church enabled Gregory III to

The claim of the church upon the temporal authority was strengthened all the more by the personal influence of men like Leo I, Gregory I, Gregory II, Gregory III, Nicholas I, and others who were the real makers of the papacy by their virtue, honesty, etc.

The attitude of the Ottonians also helped the Papacy to cure its ills and to emerge as a great force which enabled it under Gregory VII to put forward wide, even preposterous claims over the state. The three Ottos unwittingly served the cause of the church as against the state, by giving it men like Bruno and helping it to rise in higher moral plane.

Henry III was an exception after the church

had acquired so much strength, to have made and
unmade popes. He treated the popes and the bishops
as his subjects owing allegiance to him. Despite
the tremendous authority exercised by Henry III
over the papacy, the very Pope Leo IX whom he had
appointed in 1048 showed signs of independence
towards the end of his reign. The coming event—the
investiture contest—was casting its shadow before.
The attitude of Pope Leo IX portended the coming
storm. The popes were slowly perceiving how vast
were the opportunities of universal domination.
With the death of Henry III leaving a boy of six to
succeed him and the man Hildebrand, a papal
official as power behind the throne, the struggle
between the empire and the papacy was not long to
begin.

*put forward
wider claims*

*Investiture
contest cast
its shadow
before*

CHAPTER 12

The Investiture Contest

*Hildebrand
took up the
Cluniac reform
movement*

1/The Empire versus the Papacy : THE ACCESSION OF HENRY IV, a boy of six to the throne offered unique opportunity for the papacy to advance its claims. In fact, the papacy was waiting for such an opportunity. Hildebrand had already been serving as an adviser to several popes. He had also taken up the Cluniac movement in right earnest, for he saw in it the way to greater authority of the church.

*Cluniac
movement
greatest event
of the 10th
and 11th
centuries*

(a) **Cluniac Reforms :** The greatest event of the tenth and eleventh centuries was the Cluniac reform movement. It began as an attempt to co-ordinate and reform the monasteries but gradually it became a movement for remedying the abuses connected with the life of the clergy and the laity. The general anarchy in the ninth century resulted in undermining of the monastic discipline and much of the properties had been dissipated due to lack of discipline as also to the invasions of the Norsemen, heathen Vikings, etc., and the greedy feudal nobles. Lay abbots were placed in charge of the monasteries, who treated the monastic properties as their own. Trafficking in monastic properties was notoriously flagrant. Men like St. Nilus, Romuald, Richard, Gerhard, and others denounced ways into which the monasteries and the monks had fallen. They initiated programmes of reform. But all these movements had been overshadowed by the powerful wave of reforms that had begun to spread from the Benedictine monastery of Cluny in Burgundy. So great was the influence of the monastery of Cluny in the spread of the reform movement, that Cluny became synonymous with reforms.

*Denunciation
of the ways
of the Church
by St. Nilus,
Romuald,
Richard
and others*

The monastery of Cluny which was founded in 910 by William, Count of Auvergne and Duke of Aquitaine was kept free from all feudal influences and entanglements. It was freed, from the very beginning, from control of bishops or lay authority and was made only subject to the pope. It, therefore, became a model of independence. Cluny began to assume control over other monasteries and founded a large number of new ones. Cluniac organisation was both simple and centralised. There was only one abbot at Cluny and only priors, each at the head of every monastic house. Regular concourse used to be held at Cluny presided over by the abbot. It did not take long before the Cluniac movement spread from Burgundy into France and Spain, Lorraine and England, Germany and Italy. By the twelfth century the monastery of Cluny had three hundred priories, *i.e.* monastic houses under it.

*Monastery
of Cluny*

*Spread of the
Cluniac
reform
movement*

The Cluniac reformers advocated a return to older and purer standards of monastic life and living. They wanted a return to Benedict's rule. Not only that, they even felt free to make improvements upon Benedictine rule. Their aim was to prevent the evil of contemporary lawlessness in which monks and laymen followed the bent of their selfish passions as far as their power extended.

*Advocacy for
a return to
old and purer
standards of
monastic life*

Like most reformers, they thought that their business was not so much manual labour or scholarly work as chanting praises of God for their own salvation as well as for those for whom they were interceding. In their laying no emphasis on the manual labour by the monks, they deviated from Benedict's rule which prescribed much manual labour.

*Deviation
from Bene-
dictine Rule*

Apart from what has been said above, the programme of Cluniac reforms included a demand for (i) the return to the prescription of canon law regarding celibacy of the clergy, (ii) chastity of the clergy, (iii) clerical election and induction into church

*Demands of
the Cluniac
reformation*

offices, (iv) holding and management of the church property by the clergy.

*Consequence
upon Church
and laity*

The influence of the Cluniac reform movement was of great consequence both upon the church and the laity. The characteristic Cluniac stand for free election of their abbot and priors, independently of any secular control, was bound to react on the election of ordinary bishops and abbots. From the Cluniac free election, independently of any secular control, eventually arose the demand of the medieval church to do things independently of the secular authority—be it the king or the emperor.

*Celibacy of
priesthood*

Celibacy of the priesthood had also come as the result of the Cluniac influence. Celibacy of the clergy in the holy order was a gift of the Cluniacs.

*Higher moral
standard of
the clergy
demanded*

Cluniac monks were gradually being appointed bishops. This perforce directed the attention of the secular clergy to conform to higher moral standards. The Cluniac movement attracted a large number of reformers some of whom became even more radical than the original Cluniacs.

*Promotion
of peace*

Further, Cluny took lead through her abbots in a movement to mitigate the horrors of private warfare and promotion of peace which was a condition precedent to reform.

*Cluniac claim
of indepen-
dence of
election and
investiture
from lay
authority*

It must be noted here that the Cluniac claim that the church officials were to be elected independently of the secular authority revolutionised the relation of the king and lords with the church and the churchmen. It practically threatened to deprive the German kings of the very basis of the strength, their alliance with the church. The Cluniac demand that bishops and archbishops should be invested with the spiritual symbols, that is, the insignia of office—the ring and the staff by the proper ecclesiastical authority and not by the king weakened the tie between the state and the church.

The Cluniac reformers, however, had no easy time. Some of them were mutilated, even murdered. The parish clergy regarded the call for celibacy as monstrous and turned synods into pandemonium when the subject was raised for discussion. Neither the German church nor the German kings wanted to break their mutual alliance. The reformers, naturally, looked towards Rome. Otto III's reforming zeal made the Cluniac reformers hopeful of getting support from the papacy, which they were refused by the German church. By the middle of the eleventh century the Cluniac reform programme was accepted by the papacy. Henceforth it became a European movement. Monk Hildebrand who was the power behind the papal throne from 1046 took up the Cluniac reform and later in 1073 when he became pope as Gregory VII, he became a more avowed leader of the reform movement. Under him the Cluniac movement took the new name of Hildebrandine or Gregorian reform.

*Persecution
of the Cluniac
reformers*

*Otto III and
Hildebrand
—later Pope
Gregory
VII's support*

Gregory VII as also the reforming popes before and after him were earnest in their reform programme. They surely realised that in their effort to make the church supreme both in spiritual and secular matters, they would come in conflict with the state. Reform would inevitably raise the question, whose—the emperor or the pope's was the superior power? Two fraudulent documents *Pseudo-Isidorian Decretals* and the *Donation of Constantine*, constituted the programme for the popes' spiritual supremacy over the church and temporal supremacy over the state. The popes and the reformers began to quote from those two documents in order to establish the supremacy of the papacy over both the church and the state. Such claims were the causes for the investiture contest between the empire and the papacy, in England and elsewhere.

*Effort to make
the Church
supreme in
both secular
and spiritual
matters fraught
with danger of
conflict with
the state*

*Fraudulent
efforts:
Pseudo-
Isidorian
Decretals and
Donation of
Constantine*

The reform programme was more important to the papacy than as a simple reform necessitated by

Need for reforms

the prevalent laxity of the church. It was more necessary for centralising the authority of the pope over the church and to do away with the feudal influences within the church itself. Again, if the papacy would become supreme over the church and yet remain dependent on the state, the purpose of the reform would not be fulfilled. This necessitated the control of the temporal authority as well, by the church. In the struggle for supremacy between the state and the church under Emperor Henry IV and Pope Gregory VII the truth of the above remark could be seen.

Henry IV's minority—easy inroad into royal property by lay and ecclesiastical nobility

(b) **Struggle between Henry IV and Gregory VII :** It was by a strange irony of fate that, Henry IV, successor of Henry III had to face an inimical church whose power was enhanced by acts of his father. Never did Henry III imagine that the reformed church would enter into a struggle with his own son. During the period of minority of Henry IV (1056–65) the German nobility, both lay and ecclesiastical, began to make inroads into the royal property and claim sovereign rights on a general scale. It was only after 1065 when Henry IV had attained majority that he could free himself from the tutelage and adopt a policy of his own. This policy was nothing but a continuation of the policy of Ottos as modified later by Conrad II.

Henry IV's use of the Church as a source of revenue

One of the first acts of Henry IV was to use the church as a major source of revenue. He even did not hesitate to settle church offices on payment. This outraged the feelings of some of the reformers who appealed to Rome against Henry IV. He also brought into his services persons of obscure origin and relied less on higher nobility. The crown property that had been expropriated during his minority was sought to be recovered. In short, his plans and policies were of the same nature as those followed by the Capetian kings of France in strengthening the monarchy. All this led* to a widespread

hatred towards him, for any one whose interest was touched would go into his opposition camp. From the policy enunciated by Henry IV, it must be said that if not the greatest or most successful, Henry IV was certainly the wisest of the medieval kings.

One measure that had provoked the greatest opposition was his attempt to develop a compact royal domain in southern Saxony and northern Thuringia. In Saxony the period of Henry IV's regency was extremely costly. Royal forests, heaths and other properties were freely used by the Saxons. Henry now prohibited private exploitation of these properties and began to raise revenue by sale of licenses for lumbering, pasturage, fishing, mill sites, etc. In order to protect the land recovered, which was lost during his minority Henry established castles in Saxony and Thuringia. All this seemed to the Saxons in particular, nothing short of tyranny. By 1073, year in which Hildebrand was elected pope, Henry had driven, by his policy, the Saxons to rebellion.

His attempt to develop compact royal domain provoked greatest opposition

Henry IV's earlier contemporary, Pope Nicholas II (1059–61) had by a decree fixed the manner of the election of the pope which did away with all interference of the Roman nobles and the German emperors in the papal elections. But not daring to ignore Henry IV altogether it was included in the proceedings of the synod in which the decree was published, that the decree would not damage 'the honour and reverence due to our beloved son Henry'. This was a clear recognition of the right of the emperor to confirm papal elections.

Henry IV's right to confirm papal elections recognised

The papacy did not stop at that. It entered into an alliance with the Normans of southern Italy, which was nothing short of inviting conflict with the German empire. Within Italy as well, the papacy made the houses of Tuscany, Milan, and the Lombard towns its allies.

Pope's alliance with the Normans of southern Italy

*Enthronement
of Pope
Gregory VII
(1073)*

2/Pope Gregory VII (1073-85) : The year 1073 was momentous in its consequences both for Henry IV and the church. Hildebrand was placed on the papal throne by a tumultuous mob in Rome. He had a long apprenticeship in leadership of the church spread over a period of twenty-five years when he acted as the power behind the papal throne. He was of peasant extraction, a little, homely, pale-faced man with small glittering eyes but with weak voice. His nature was revealed in the cold steel-like quality of his will.

*Lofty ideas
about papal
supremacy*

Gregory was the greatest exponent of the papal supremacy in both spiritual and temporal matters. 'No pope has been more hypnotised by the ineffable dignity of his office, none perhaps has ever felt himself so completely identified with St. Peter' than Gregory. According to Gregory righteousness meant obedience to God, and obedience to God meant obedience to the pope. To enforce obedience and his own will, Gregory employed to the full every means of the centralised administration of the church. Disobedience was punished by him with

*Gregory VII's
Dictatus
Papae*

deposition, excommunication, etc. In Gregory VII's *Dictatus Papae* that is, the Pope's Dictate, proclaimed that "the Roman church has never erred, nor will it err to all eternity. Pope himself may be judged by no one and to him should be referred the more important cases of every church; a sentence passed by him may be retracted by no one. No synod shall be called a general one without his consent; in a council his legate even if of a lower grade, is above all bishops and can pass sentence of deposition against them."

*Gregory's
interpretation
of Pope's
supremacy
contrary to
Charles'*

Pope Gregory VII's papal theocracy makes an interesting reading. If Charles the Great's theocracy reposed all power into the hands of the emperor, and because the emperor had not enough time to look into the church, the church was to be under the pope who was his subordinate, Gregory explained

his theocracy in the contrary way. In his papal theocracy it is not the emperor but the pope who is the representative of God on earth and the pope is the emperor in the world. The emperors, kings and nobles are vassals of the pope and hold their domains as fiefs from him. All this, as is evident, was the cherished dream of Gregory VII and he set himself to make his dream come true.

Pope—God's representative on earth—emperors, kings, etc., his vassals

When it is remembered that Henry IV was in no mood to abdicate his authority to the church, the claims of Gregory VII would appear to him nothing but preposterous. But unfortunately for Henry IV, his struggle with the papacy almost synchronised in point of time with the Saxon rebellion. But Henry succeeded in quelling the Saxon rebellion by 1075, the year in which Gregory summoned a synod at Lenten. In this synod decrees against simoniacal and unchaste clergy were passed and people were asked not to recognise them. Lay investiture, that is, investing the church officials with staff and the ring as symbol of office by the emperor, king or lord was prohibited. Three German bishops and one archbishop who did not care for Gregory's decrees as also five of Emperor Henry's counsellors were threatened with excommunication, Henry IV now having dealt with the Saxon rebellion effectively, was in no mood to take these threats seriously and he even did not care to have a straight fight with the pope. He went on in his wonted way, investing the German bishops and did not exclude the excommunicated counsellors. He went to the extent of putting his own nominee into the archbishopric of Milan in north Italy for retaining control over northern Italy. Bishoprics of Spoleto and Fermo were also filled up by his own nominees. All this was too much for the imperious Pope Gregory VII to endure silently. He demanded of Henry IV in a letter addressed to the latter that the edict against lay investiture was to be accepted and obeyed not only by Henry himself but

Henry IV not prepared to abdicate his authority to the church

Lenten synod

Henry's supporters threatened with excommunication

Henry went on investing the bishops and nominate archbishops

Gregory VII enraged by every one who confessed and worshipped Christ. The sting was in the tail. The letter ended with a threat of excommunication and deposition of Henry IV if he would not readily submit.

Council of German bishops summoned at Worms (1076) Henry IV was not to be cowed by the threat. As a counter measure he summoned a council of the German bishops (Jan. 1076) at Worms where all German bishops expressed great resentment at the arbitrary way in which the pope threatened them with excommunication and sought to interfere in the local affairs. In a letter, meant to be a reply to pope's communication to Henry IV, they renounced obedience to the pope, which they remarked, they had never promised to him. They also repudiated the pope. "As thou didst publicly proclaim, none of us has been a bishop to thee, so thee henceforth will be pope to none of us." In a covering letter Henry IV addressed the pope as 'to Hildebrand, at present not pope but false monk' and called upon him to relinquish the papal chair.

In Lenten Synod Gregory VII excommunicated archbishop of Mainz and bishops who joined Henry's side; others threatened with excommunication In the Lenten synod of 1076 Gregory VII undeterred, forthwith excommunicated and suspended from office the archbishop of Mainz and the bishops who joined in the schism. All other German bishops were asked to submit to Rome in order to avoid suspension from office. With regard to Henry IV Gregory took a severe step. His decree against Henry ran thus: "I deprive King Henry, who has rebelled against the church with unheard of audacity, of the government over the whole kingdom of Germany and Italy and I release all Christianmen from the allegiance which they have sworn or may swear to him, and I forbid anyone to serve him as king." The real import of this decree was to place Henry under *anathema* which would make his subjects free to disobey him, and not only that, he was deposed and excommunicated.

After all, the age in which Henry IV lived was

one in which religion had a mysteriously great influence upon the mind of the people. When it came to going against the pope's decree and obeying a deposed and excommunicated king, there began much confusion which destroyed the unity of the German church. Personal dislike of Henry's methods and plans also encouraged some to obey the decree of the pope. More timid bishops were scampering to make peace with the pope. The movement against Henry IV was so rapidly spreading in Germany that a meeting of German princes had to be summoned in October, 1076 in which Henry had to swallow his words and profess obedience to the Roman church and the Pope Gregory VII. He also retracted his condemnation of Pope Gregory. The German princes agreed among themselves that if by February 22, 1077, Henry would not get removed the decree of excommunication from his head by suitable amends, they would not recognise him as their king. The princes also decided that a meeting under the presidency of Gregory VII would be called at Augsburg in February, 1076 in which a new king would be elected should it be found that Henry was not fit to reign.

The news of this council's decision was naturally very much welcome to Gregory although it was as bad as it could be for Henry. Henry decided to avoid facing his hostile subjects at Augsburg and resolved to appear before the pope as a penitent. With his devoted wife Bertha, Henry secretly crossed over to Italy in the severest winter. The Italians received him enthusiastically and offered him military assistance. Pope Gregory, out of fear, took shelter at *Canossa*, a fortified castle of Countess Matilda of Tuscany. Henry's refusal to accept the proffered military assistance by the Italians dejected them very much.

For three successive days Henry IV barefooted and wearing a hair-coat of the penitent stood silently

*Confusion
among the
Germans—
unity of
German
church
destroyed*

*Movement
against
Henry gained
ground rapidly*

*Proposal to
call a meeting
at Augsburg*

*Henry's
surrender to
Gregory at
Canossa*

*Gregory
relentless*

<i>Intercession by the digni- taries about the Pope</i>	<p>before the gate at Canossa seeking admittance to the pope's presence. Gregory was unrelenting. He asked Henry to return to Germany and to present himself at Augsburg. But pity and sympathy had moved the church dignitaries about the pope. They interceded on behalf of Henry IV and the gates were thrown open. Gregory not sure of Henry's sincerity was hesitant at first, but he could not refuse absolution to a penitent sinner. Further, to be more harsh with Henry was fraught with the possible danger of an antagonised Germany. Gregory made Henry</p>
<i>Henry's excom- munication withdrawn</i>	<p>take an oath to make amends with regard to discontent and discord in Germany and removed the decree of excommunication from his head.</p>
<i>Significance of Canossa</i>	<p>Ostensibly Canossa meant a triumph for Gregory, for it had humiliated Henry IV beyond measure and compelled him to accept the supremacy of the pope. But when looked at from beneath the surface, it becomes clear that at Canossa Henry had outwitted Gregory. Henry prevented a union of Gregory and his German enemies. To present himself before the German council at Augsburg would have been a much greater and much more real humiliation on the part of Henry, and this he avoided. Here he won a strategic victory over Gregory. To the contemporaries, the proceedings at Canossa were of little importance, for it was no serious humiliation to reconcile oneself to God through the church. The triumph of Gregory was nothing more than making good his excommunication of a German king who had to undertake a perilous journey in a severest winter to bow before him. Gregory's triumph was nothing more than this. "Posterity has chosen unhistorically to take Canossa as a symbol of the subjection of the state to the Church." In fact, Canossa may be looked upon as an indirect triumph of Henry IV. He had robbed Gregory of the best part of his victory by preventing his coming to Germany to preside over the German council at Augsburg. If</p>
<i>Canossa an indirect triumph of Henry IV</i>	

the pope had shown his power by keeping the emperor standing as a penitent, at his door for three successive days, he had overshot the mark, for, the people thought him too severe and unforgiving. Their sympathies were naturally with the emperor. 'Although the world regarded the immediate victory as Gregory's, it was really Henry's. For, from this time, Henry's power increased and Gregory's diminished.'

*People's
sympathies
with Henry*

It became apparent before long that Henry was not sincere in his confession and penitence at Canossa. On his way back to Germany he started plotting against Gregory and after reaching Germany he began to plan for self-defence. In Germany the rebellious princes and nobles went their way as before. The Saxons and the Swabians continued their opposition to him. They reverted to their ancient right of electing the German king, and in 1077 with the approval of two papal legates, they elected Rudolf, Duke of Swabia as their king on condition that he would not make kingship hereditary. Rudolf was no match for Henry, but the trouble brought in Gregory as mediator. He insisted that the final choice of the king was his prerogative and prescribed certain conditions such as homage, oath of fealty to the pope as conditions precedent to any one's recognition as king. Civil war in Germany dragged on for years. After three years of indecision Gregory put Henry IV under a ban deposing and excommunicating him. But eventually Henry IV emerged victorious in Germany. He at once replied to Pope's deposition and excommunication of him by setting up an antipope and invading Italy to depose Gregory from the papal chair. He took Rome after a desultory fighting for three years and besieged Gregory in the castle of San Angelo. But Gregory summoned his faithful subject Robert Guiscard who appeared with a large force and compelled Henry to withdraw from Rome and rescued

*Henry's
insincere
penitence*

*Saxon and
Swabians
princes and
nobles con-
tinued their
opposition to
Henry*

*Civil war in
Germany:
Henry victo-
rious*

*Henry's
attempt to set
up an antipope*

*Withdrawal
of Pope to
Salerno*

the pope. He gave Rome to his troops to be freely pillaged by them. The Romans were so much annoyed with the pope for this pillage that he did not dare remain in the city. He withdrew to Salerno where he died in May, 1085. His last words were 'I have loved justice and hated iniquity, therefore, I die an exile.'

*Gregory's
success and
failure*

Gregory made great claims without being able to fully realise them. He had to make concessions to William the Conqueror of England, Philip I of France both of whom retained the right of investiture. His legates in Spain were roundly abused and humiliated, he himself died in exile. Henry IV also held his own against Gregory in many respects. All the same, it was Gregory who had established the custom of sending papal legates to all parts of Europe. He had put his authority above that of a council, and destroyed the independence of the bishops, by giving freedom to all the clergy to directly appeal to the pope. It must also be said to his credit that he made celibacy of the clergy the rule of the church and freed the papacy from lay interference whether imperial or Roman by establishing the college of Cardinals. In short, he formulated the claims of the papacy to absolute power and marked out its future policy.

*Canossa—a
premature
victory*

Lastly, it must be noted that despite his partial success, Canossa was a premature victory. For it did not ensure the supremacy of the papacy over temporal power nor did it bring to an end the investiture conflict. The fact that Gregory's successors dropped his extraordinary claim to be the lord of secular princes and contented themselves with a vigorous enforcement of reforms proved that the triumph of Gregory at Canossa was more apparent than real.

The investiture struggle continued even after Gregory's death, but it had changed its character.

The question of the relationship between the state and the church was made a matter of public discussion and prolific pamphleteering. If one may speak of any public opinion in medieval Europe, it manifested itself over the investiture question. Henry IV employed an eminent jurist Peter Crassus to defend his cause while the pope employed Merrygold of Lantenbach.

Pamphleteering on Pope's claims

Pope Gregory's successor Urban II had to pass several years in conflict with the antipope set up by Henry IV. The ban of excommunication and deposition on Henry IV still continued. The easiest method followed by the popes Urban II (1088-99), Paschal II (1099-1118), etc., was to fan the fire of rebellion in Germany. When Henry's son Conrad III revolted against his father he was welcomed to Italy. His second son Henry also revolted against him and elected as Henry V, king of Germany by some of the feudal princes. But Henry IV never lost the loyalty of the towns and was contented to continue with depleted authority till his death in 1106.

Pope Urban II's conflict with the antipope: Urban II's method of fanning fire of rebellion in Germany

In the meantime the great enthusiasm aroused by the Crusade pushed the investiture contest somewhat to the background. All the same the struggle persisted. Henry V, son of Henry IV, broke with the papal party, took up his father's counsellors and policy and renewed the struggle with the pope. After several attempts at an agreement between the contestant parties a compromise was reached at a meeting of German princes and papal legates, the decisions whereof was incorporated in the *Concordat of Worms* (1122). The emperor conceded to the pope the right to invest the clergy with spiritual authority which was symbolised by the ring and the staff. On the other hand, the bishops and abbots were to be elected in presence of the emperor or his representative, but in cases of contests or disputed elections final decision was to be in the hands of the

Struggle between the Emperor and the Pope renewed

Concordat of Worms (1122)

emperor. The clergy were to be invested with their lands and all civil and judicial functions by the emperor. Sceptre was to be the symbol of such investiture. The Concordat of Worms recognised the double nature, spiritual and temporal, of the office of the bishops.

*Investiture
contest in
England and
France settled:
terms of
settlement
in England*

In the meantime the question of investiture was also settled both in England and France after some struggle. In England the formal settlement of the investiture was reached in 1106-07. According to the terms of the settlement the king was no longer to invest the bishop or the abbot, but he or his representative must be present in all episcopal elections. The king was to concede to the newly elected bishops or abbots their temporal possessions and rights only after receiving their homage.

*Terms of
settlement in
France*

In France, settlement of the investiture question followed a different pattern than the English settlement. There was to be no lay investiture, but the king or noble concerned was to grant the *regalia*, that is the temporal rights and possessions to the newly elected bishop or abbot, after receiving an oath of fealty. The French king, retained the right of interference in episcopal elections and to authorise, confirm or postpone such elections. In France the church could not free itself from secular control.

*Struggle
between the
empire and
the papacy
costly to the
prestige of
German
monarchy*

The consequences of the investiture struggle are to be seen both in the church and the state. The long struggle between emperors Henry IV and Henry V, and the papacy had been very much costly to the prestige and power of the German monarchy. There was a rift in the loyalty of the German church. For it was divided in its loyalty between the emperor and the pope. It had militated against the unity of the German church. Constant encouragement from the papacy and his followers to rebellion kept Germany in a hopeless state of disorder from which the selfish nobility, not the king, profited.

The long-pursued policy of alliance between the king and the church was given up and the former began to rely more upon the nobles. In times of turmoil the German kings had to buy support of the nobility by further grants of crown lands and sovereign rights. This was done in case of the clergy as well.

Policy of alliance between the king and church substituted by that between king and the nobles

The papacy, however, had gained much in power and prestige. If not fully, the papacy succeeded in enforcing its reform programme to a large extent. Simony was forbidden, celibacy of the priesthood enforced, and lay investiture abolished. But it was not possible to free the church from the state, although the papacy established its supremacy within the church itself. Although, the church had to travel a long way to fulfil its ambition yet it succeeded in invalidating the claims of the kings to be regarded as God's representatives on earth and partially succeeded in making good its claim to temporal supremacy besides spiritual.

Gain in power and prestige by the papacy: Reform programme carried through largely

CHAPTER 13

The Hohenstaufens

*Two popes
elected by
rival factions
in Rome*

1/Struggle between the Empire and the Papacy : AT THE DEATH OF HENRY V, Lothar, Duke of Saxony was elected king. His election was smooth because he made favourable terms with the papal party and agreed to maintain the interests of the church. He even got his election confirmed by the pope. In 1130 two popes were elected in Rome by rival factions, one of whom was Pope Innocent II. The latter enlisted the support of Abbot Bernard, the most influential man in contemporary Europe, and through him obtained the support of both France and Germany. Lothar even crossed over to Italy and by arms set up Innocent on the papal throne. Pope Innocent out of gratitude crowned Lothar emperor and settled Tuscany as a fief on him which made Lothar a vassal of the pope. A picture was painted showing Lothar kneeling at the feet of Pope Innocent to receive the imperial crown. What Innocent intended this picture to mean was that the emperor received the imperial crown as a fief from the pope and as such emperor was his subordinate.

*Antipope
Anaclete II*

*Pope's
support from
Lothar proved
unavailing*

The antipope was Anaclete II. Roger II of Sicily came to the aid of Anaclete on condition that Roger should be made king. But in the meantime Innocent had been thoroughly entrenched in his position. Roger began to oppose him on behalf of Anaclete. Innocent II summoned Lothar to his assistance but Lothar's campaign failed disastrously. Pope Innocent had eventually to buy peace confirming the title of king to Roger II.

Conrad III

2/The Hohenstaufen Kings : On Lothar's death Conrad III, the first of the Hohenstaufen kings was

elected to succeed him. There was nothing very special about the reign of Conrad III. The kingdom was in confusion. His departure on a crusade made the situation worse. Violence, private war and political disintegration increased. On his return he had to enter into a war with Henry the Lion, Duke of Saxony who was increasing his power and status during Conrad's absence. The war between Henry the Lion and Conrad made the prevalent confusion worse confounded and Conrad's reign ended in total disaster.

*War between
Henry Lion
and Conrad*

3/Frederick I, Barbarossa (1152-90): Frederick I, commonly known as Frederick Barbarossa for his reddish blond beard was unanimously elected king of Germany in 1152. Germany was then divided into two opposing parties: the Welfs and the Waiblings. The Hohenstaufen kings and emperors belonged to the Waiblings named after their village of the same name while their opposition party belonged to the Welfs. These names were also transplanted to Italy in the early thirteenth century as Guelf and the Ghibelline, the Guelf for the imperial party and the Ghibelline for the anti-imperial papal party.

*Welfs and the
Waiblings:
Later Guelf
and Ghibelline
of Italy*

Frederick Barbarossa was not only a Hohenstaufen, but he carried in his veins the blood of the line of Henry the Lion, the greatest rival of the king, through his mother's side. On his unanimous election to succeed his uncle Conrad III, Frederick set himself to the task of making peace with the Welfs, *i.e.* the opposition party. Henry the Lion, the leader of the Welfs was recognised as practically independent, his right to the duchy of Saxony was admitted and the duchy of Bavaria was restored to him, which was taken by Conrad III from his father. To the Welfs was also given the imperial fiefs in Tuscany and Spoleto. Thus having converted the leading families of the nobility into friends from enemies, Frederick could now set himself to the task of

*Policy of
peace with
Welfs*

rebuilding Germany and the German monarchy, which, however, he did not do being carried away by the mirage of Roman imperial dignity.

*Frederick's
success in the
church*

In the church Frederick achieved spectacular success. The difficulties in which the papacy found itself on the death of St. Bernard gave Frederick the chance to exercise full rights over clerical elections according to his own interpretation of the Concordat of Worms. The German clergy, unless egged on by the pope, were very willing to accept the royal interference in clerical elections. In cases of disputed elections Frederick placed his own nominees. He appointed the archbishop of Magdeburg without the pope's consent. He even did not hesitate to depose the archbishop of Mainz for political reason, as also a number of bishops. All this was agreed to by the pope. Frederick ultimately succeeded in manning the German episcopate by his own confidants. Secular duties were strictly enforced by Frederick on the church and its failure to supply feudal contingents entailed confiscation of the *regalia*. In ability and usefulness to the crown his bishops were well qualified. Bishops like Rainald and Christian were his excellent chancellors.

*Frederick
appointed
archbishop of
Magdeburg,
deposed
archbishop
of Mainz*

*Secular duties
enforced on
the church by
Frederick*

*Frederick esta-
blished his
full authority
in Germany:
victim to the
mirage of im-
perial dignity*

By 1154 Frederick succeeded in establishing his full authority in Germany. But soon he fell a victim to the attracting mirage of the Roman imperial dignity.

*Blending of
generalship
and statesman-
ship, nobler
motives and
personal ambi-
tion, generosity
and church*

(a) HIS CHARACTER: (i) He had the rare gifts of generalship and statesmanship at the same time. He joined nobler motives with personal ambition and was worthy of the general confidence that he had inspired. He had already had some practical experience which stood him in good stead as a ruler. He had combined loyalty to his uncle Conrad III with friendship for his cousin, Henry the Lion of Bavaria. His mediation saved Duke Welf VI from disaster. As a crusader, he earned wide fame and

many owed their safety and lives to his skill, courage and energy. He had kingly bearing and fair proportions. He was generous and chivalrous. His attitude towards the church was an independent one. There was a passionate ardour in his character. He was a man of great ideas as also of great practical wisdom. He was sincere in his religion, his personal life was blameless and pure, he was given to practices of piety and charity. He was habitually just and a man of words, although at times he might have been found to be severe. He was an example of adventurous chivalry. "He was filled with the highest conception of the imperial office, its majesty, its right and at the same time its obligations. He had a rigid sense of justice and dispensed it impartially. He could be merciful; he could be severe, specially against disorders that disturbed the peace of the kingdom; he could be ruthless too in vindicating his rights. He was fine figure of a king, handsome and of powerful build, a genial companion, jovial and generous."

Man of great ideas and practical wisdom

His conception of imperial office

But Frederick was not above the defects of upbringing and of his time. By training and martial pursuit he was a soldier, and as such, his mental education consisted of no more than of knowing stories of kings and heroes of old. He could not free himself from the shackles of tradition and instinctively he grew to be a conservative, his laws did not show any new or better ideal than the feudal laws sought to serve. He lacked the true spirit and sense of Roman imperialism.

Limitations of his upbringing and of his times

(b) HIS POLICY : Frederick may be said to have had two policies, one as king of Germany, other as emperor of the world. At home three aims guided Frederick's policy: alliance with the Welfs, putting down private wars and renewal of authority over the German church. In all these, he succeeded well.

His double policies: Policy towards Germany: three aims

Policy towards Italy: to assert his power Frederick's policy towards Italy was determined by his willingness to assert his power over Italy. His aim was to restore the waning glories of the empire and for thirty-seven years of his rule he did never for a moment flinch from this difficult task. To him Italy was as much a section of the Holy Roman Empire as Germany. "To him Germany and Italy were but two sections of the Holy Roman Empire whose rights and dignities he strove with all his might to uphold." His masterful disposition and his exalted notions of the character of his office made him, as he thought, a beneficiary and successor to all the rights that had been exercised by 'Justinian or Constantine, by Charlemagne or Otto the Great'.

Thought himself to be a successor of Justinian or Constantine, Charlemagne or Otto the Great Two antagonists that threatened to undo Frederick's policy were papacy and the municipal independence of Italy—the two enemies which in the end were to destroy the empire Frederick sought to establish.

Imperialist Hildebrand He has been very truly described as an 'Imperialist Hildebrand' and "Hildebrand himself had no more lofty consciousness of his high purpose and divine mission to establish God's kingdom on earth."

A backward-looking statesman (c) HIS STATESMANSHIP : It has been remarked that Frederick Barbarossa was a backward-looking statesman bent on restoring the past. His implicit belief in the legend of the Holy Roman Empire and his considering himself as heir to the world dominion of Augustus, Constantine, Justinian and Charlemagne was more romantic than real. His political ideas and ideals were coloured by romance and not based on the realities of the situation. He was tempted away by the mirage of Roman imperial seat, to the utter neglect of his own native land of Germany. His success in Germany during the first two years of his reign showed what he could have really achieved if he had spent more time in consolidating his monarchy and improving his country. But it must be said that Frederick's absolutism and attempt at world domination were not the outcome of a lust for personal

Romantic ideal of the Holy Roman Empire: Idea of world dominion

power but the logical product of his conception of his office. His ideals were too romantic to admit of being turned into reality. The last bold step taken by Frederick was to put himself at the head of European affairs by assuming the leadership of the crusading movement, which always had belonged to the pope. In 1188 he took the cross to head the third crusade which was masterfully organised and conducted till his death in 1190.

*Leadership of
the Crusades*

4/Frederick Barbarossa and Italy : In the midtwelfth century Italy offered a much more complex and difficult problem to the German emperor, than ever before. In southern Italy the emperor was completely ignored by the Normans. The northern part of the central Italy had become independent of the emperor for all practical purposes. The *Concordat of Worms* had made the Imperial control slip off from the Italian episcopate. Lothar and Conrad III's times were one of imperial indifference towards Italy and if Lothar did not care for Italy, Conrad did not bother for it. But during this period of imperial indifference a profound change began to come upon the papal towns of the Po Valley. The increased trade and commerce with the eastern Mediterranean due to the contact established by way of the crusades, led to a revival of town life. The Lombard towns became particularly prominent in this regard. The Lombard merchants were both bold and strong enough to disregard the restrictions put upon them, and established their own municipal governments which were like self-governing communes usually under the headship of a consul. Formerly the German emperor used to grant the regalian rights to the local nobles and bishops to be exercised on behalf of the emperor. Now, all such rights were being exercised by these municipal governments the rights which were sovereign rights without caring to take permission of the German emperor. From the strict legal point of view such

*Concordat
of Worms*

*Italian
municipal
governments'
independent
attitude*

*Usurpation
of sovereign
rights by the
municipal
governments*

usurpation of the sovereign rights was a flagrant violation of the imperial prerogatives. The towns were mostly manned by people most of whom were erstwhile serfs. This course of violation of the imperial prerogatives was necessarily intolerable to Frederick Barbarossa.

*Frederick
Barbarossa's
conflict with
the municipal
impertinence*

Milan was the greatest offender in this respect and Tortona the next. Milan aspired after absorbing the neighbouring towns into a Milanese city-state. Frederick would not only not tolerate the impertinence of these municipal towns but would not leave the pope with the independence he enjoyed. Frederick regarded himself as the successor to all that Constantine and Justinian had stood for and would not stop short of anything but the power once Charlemagne exercised over Italy. The task was difficult indeed, when Frederick came to Italy with his determination, in 1154.

*Papacy,
Lombard
towns and
Normans of
South Italy
did not make
common cause*

Fortunately for Frederick all the forces namely (i) the papacy, (ii) the Lombard towns and (iii) the Normans of the Southern Italy, did not join hands against him, and as such the situation was, at least, better than that. Pope intolerant of the disobedience of the Lombard towns and afraid of an attack by the Normans sided with Frederick. Frederick was to restore the Italian towns to the papal obedience and to put down the Normans, the dangerous vassals of the empire as well as of the papacy and to prevent the Byzantines from getting a foothold in Italy. The Pope Hadrian IV was to crown Frederick emperor in return for his services.

*First Italian
campaign:
Tortona
razed to the
ground to
strike terror
to whole of
Lombardy*

Frederick encountered difficulties with the Lombardian towns. Milan resisted him stoutly. Pavia was, however, on his side and at the instance of Pavia, an enemy of Milan, Frederick razed Tortona, a town under Milan's protection, to strike terror in the whole of Lombardy. But barring this, Frederick accomplished nothing, but he got the imperial crown all the same.

Soon misunderstanding arose between Frederick and the pope, which the latter had to compound seeing that the whole of Germany was united like a man behind Frederick. In 1158 Frederick was on his second Italian campaign, mainly to subdue the Lombard towns, particularly the obstinate Milanese, and to establish a new relationship with the pope and himself. His siege of Milan was successful and Milan was obliged to surrender her certain sovereign rights and to be glad to retain some amount of autonomy. At this stage Frederick summoned his famous Diet of Roncaglia wherein with the consent and advice of the professors of Roman law of the University of Bologna, Frederick decreed that only those towns would be allowed to retain *regalia* which could produce imperial charter granting them such rights. In others Frederick appointed officials called Podestas, consuls and magistrates to administer the towns on behalf of the emperor. All this would mean the cancellation of all the privileges for which the municipal towns had fought and suffered. Necessarily such decrees of Frederick were likely to be disobeyed. Further, as these were also to be applied to the papal territories, the pope was first to resist them. The pope entered into an alliance with the Norman king of Sicily. To thwart such an alliance Frederick seemed almost isolated by a combination of the papacy, the Normans and the Lombard towns. Milan, Brescia and Piacenza agreed not to make peace with the emperor without the consent of the pope.

*Second
Italian
siege of
Milan*

*Diet of
Roncaglia*

*Combination
against
Barbarossa*

Frederick's third campaign was one to crush the resistance of the Lombard towns to surrender the regalia. Frederick took violent measures. Cremona was razed to the ground, Piacenza and Brescia's fortifications were destroyed. Milan was starved to submission and reduced to ashes. All this sent a wave of terror all over Lombardy. Frederick at once made an alliance with the naval powers of Genoa

*Frederick
Barbarossa's
third cam-
paign against
Lombard
towns*

and Pisa. All seemed to be all right, the imperial possession of Italy seemed almost achieved. In 1162, Frederick marched against Rome, the only remaining place to be conquered to make his empire a reality, and to subdue the Norman king William, but it accomplished nothing for the break-out of a schism in Rome.

*Anti-imperial
party vs.
Imperial party
in Rome*

In the meantime, the death of Hadrian IV in 1159 had given rise to a schism in Rome. The anti-imperial party elected Alexander III as pope while the imperial party elected Octavian. Frederick summoned a council at Pavia which was attended mostly by the clergy of the imperial territories elected Octavian as Pope Victor IV and excommunicated Alexander III. Alexander reacted by excommunicating Frederick and releasing Frederick's subjects from his allegiance.

*Fourth Italian
campaign*

Frederick's fourth Italian campaign had nothing to do with the municipal towns of Italy. It was directed against Rome and Alexander III, but it was no more fortunate than his third. He had to leave Rome which was ravaged by a terrible pestilence.

*League of
Verona*

By 1167 opposition to Frederick began in North Italy. Venice, following the example of Milan, concluded alliances with Byzantium and Sicily and drew Verona, Vicenza and Padua to form the League of Verona. The Lombard towns also followed the example and formed the Lombard League with Milan, Cremona, Mantua, Brescia and Bergamo. Lombard League joined hands with the League of Verona. The cities numbered twenty-two, which set up a federal authority to maintain peace within the League and to provide a common army. The imperial officials appointed by Frederick after the Diet of Roncaglia silently left the town. Alexander III gave his blessings and support to this anti-imperial organisation, which founded a new city called Alessandria in honour of Alexander III.

Frederick would not rest before he could punish such contumacy. He set out on his fifth campaign and attacked Alessandria which he could not take. Frederick recognised his weakness and offered liberal terms which were accepted by the Lombard League only to be violated almost immediately. Frederick summoned reinforcement from Germany but with that even he could not succeed. His cavalry was defeated by the infantry of the Lombard League in the battle of Legnano in 1176. Frederick offered even more liberal terms but the Lombard League would not accept them. At this stage an internal disruption in the Lombard League saved the situation. Frederick made his surrender to Alexander III and recognised him as the rightful pope. Alexander III in his turn arranged a six-year-truce between Frederick and the Norman king. After six years a final settlement with the Lombard League was reached at the Peace of Constance. Frederick had to abandon his decrees of the Diet of Roncaglia and to recognise the rights of the Lombard towns to the regalia within their walls. The municipal self-government was to be formed by the towns, only after election the consuls were to be formally invested with their office by the emperor and they had to take an oath of fealty to him and become his vassals if not in a real, at least in a formal sense. Right of appeal to the emperor's court in all important cases was retained, the *fordum*, that is, a contribution by the towns towards meeting the expenses of the Italian campaigns of the emperor, was retained. The Lombard League won a position of quasi-independence. Thus ended the struggle between Frederick and the Italian towns—a struggle which showed that an empire of Frederick's concept was an anachronism. It had become a thing of the past and as such unattainable.

*Battle of
Legnano
(1176)*

*Peace of
Constance*

*Lombard
League won
a position of
quasi-
independence*

If Frederick failed and had to make concessions of great consequences to the Lombard towns, he

*Frederick
Barbarossa's*

*failure in
north Italy
compensated
by his gain in
south Italy*

more than compensated the loss in south Italy. He arranged a match between his son and the heiress of south Italy—that is the kingdom of two Sicilies—and thereby paved the way for joining the whole of Italy to the imperial possessions.

*Concordat of
Worms
(1122)*

5/Alexander III (1159-81) : The Concordat of Worms (1122) seemed to have ended the conflict between the empire and the papacy by recognising that all spiritual authority emanates from the church while all temporal authority emanates from the state: “a rendering unto Caesar the things that are Caesar’s and unto God the things that are God’s.” But whatever might have been its appearances at the moment of the first flush of a compromise after prolonged struggle, in reality it was a moral victory of the church. It saved the church from the danger of being completely secularised as well as made the situation stronger for the future conflict with the empire. With the accession of the Hohenstaufen house to the German throne, there began a fierce contention between the empire and the papacy which lasted more than a century with occasional cessations. This struggle was nothing more or less than a continuation of the earlier struggle to settle the issue whether the ‘world-priest’ or the ‘world-king’ was to be supreme. The pope and the king represented two opposite systems; the pope the spiritual government, and the emperor the civil government, and were soon forced into a bitter hostility.

*Conflict between Frederick
Barbarossa
and Pope
Alexander III
—an aspect
of the conflict
between the
empire and
the papacy*

The struggle between Frederick Barbarossa and Pope Alexander III, although separated from the earlier struggle between Henry IV and Gregory VII by a century, was yet but a different scene of the same drama.

On the death of Adrian IV in 1159, Cardinal Roland was elected Pope as Alexander III. From the papal point of view Alexander III deserves great credit for the work of his pontificate. His power was recognised all over the west as that of no other pope

before him. During his twenty-two years of pontificate he continued his predecessor's policy with such zeal and determination that the old struggle between the Empire and the Papacy was revived in all its fierceness and intensity. Alexander's election to the papal chair was disputed and an antipope Victor IV was elected by the imperialist minority among the Cardinals. Frederick followed the example of Constantine, Charlemagne and Otto and convened a council at Pavia to decide between the rival claimants to the papal chair. Alexander, as imperius and self-willed, as conscious of and determined to uphold the papal dignity even above the emperor's, as Gregory VII, refused to submit his claims to Frederick for decision. "No one else has the right to judge me, since I am the supreme judge of all the world"—was Alexander's spirited contention. Frederick declared Victor to be the canonical pope and Alexander was driven out of Rome. But the greater part of the Christian world looked upon Alexander as the rightful pope and his appeal for support from the sound churchmen throughout Europe found willing response. What was more important, the aid of the Lombard cities whose league he blessed and maintained and counselled stood him in good stead. Venice, however, maintained a sedulous neutrality; she was against the emperor but was hardly sympathetic towards the pope. Even the German prelates gradually started veering round the pope forsaking the antipope. Not even the personal presence of Frederick in Germany could keep the German prelates on the side of the antipope. There were others who stood in midway if not decidedly on the side of Alexander. They demanded a general council to heal the schism in the Christian church. The two important monastic brotherhoods—the Cistercian and Carthusian Orders worked hard for Alexander's cause and bands of Italian and German fugitives swelled the following

*Rival popes
elected by
anti-imperialist and
imperialist
parties*

*Popes and
antipopes*

*Frederick
Barbarossa
excommunicated by
Alexander*

of Alexander. The death of antipope Victor in 1164 did not smoothen out the difference. A new antipope in Paschal III was elected. Support of Henry II of England was canvassed for the antipope but the former being involved in a struggle with Thomas Becket, was clever enough not to confuse his local struggle with the general and more violent conflict between the empire and the papacy. In 1165 Frederick exhumed the bones of Charles the Great, whose spirit he thought to have been wielding, and consigned them into a golden shrine. But the same year saw Alexander more powerful and entering into Italy wherefrom he was exiled, and again possessing Rome. From Rome in the same year Alexander decreed the excommunication of the emperor.

*Lombard
cities revived
anti-imperial
struggle*

Frederick's excommunication encouraged the Lombard cities to revive their strength which had been laid waste by Frederick in his earlier Italian campaigns. Milan was rebuilt and fortified. In 1167-68 Frederick went on his fourth Italian campaign and marched straight on Rome where antipope Paschal crowned him emperor and Alexander III was put to flight. But the victory was marred by a terrible pestilence that broke out in the army of Frederick. The papalist called this pestilence to be the curse of God. In any case, this gave the Lombard League time to take its final shape and all towns from Milan to Venice, joined this League. The League founded a new city, a sort of a capital and called it Alessandria after Pope Alexander III who blessed and supported the League. The strength of the Lombard League was indirectly the strength of Alexander.

The remaining history of the conflict between Alexander and Frederick may be briefly told. In 1168 died antipope Paschal, to be followed by another antipope Calixtus III. But in Frederick's defeat in the battle of Legnano against the Lombard cities and his exhaustion compelled him to compound

his quarrel with the pope. His last attempt to detach the pope from the Lombard League failed, for, Alexander would not betray the Lombard League and ultimately, the terms of reconciliation were dictated by the victors. On 24th July, 1177 he threw himself at the feet of Alexander in the portico of St. Mark at Venice and Alexander with tears in his eyes raised his fallen enemy and gave him the kiss of peace. It was exactly hundred years since Henry IV had gone to Canossa. The Peace of Venice that followed, settled the details of the reconciliation.

*Surrender of
Frederick
Barbarossa :
Canossa
repeated :
Peace of
Venice*

6/Henry VI (1190-97) : The Holy Roman Empire, both in idea and fact, is said to have reached its medieval heights during the short reign of Henry VI, son of Frederick Barbarossa. Although not endowed with the Hohenstaufen good nature and without the knightly qualities which his father possessed in profusion, Henry VI was learned though small and pale-faced, practical, shrewd and capable, and possessed diplomatic astuteness. Unlike his father, he was no hero of romance, and knew well to turn a situation to his advantage. His single-minded purpose was to make the empire 'still greater and more powerful, than it had been under his predecessors'. The key to this end was his coming to inherit his wife's (Constance) patrimony in Southern Italy and Sicily.

*Henry VI's
reign saw the
Holy Roman
Empire reach
its medieval
heights*

*Henry
inherited
Southern
Italy and
Sicily*

The unified Norman kingdom of Southern Italy and Sicily was politically and culturally the most advanced state in Western Europe. Roger II, son of Count Roger and nephew of Robert Guiscard, was the real founder of this *first modern state* and himself the *first modern king* for the cultural progress, religious toleration and respect for local rights and usages that could be seen in that state. 'The superior traditions of art and learning of the Greek and the Mohammedan worlds were amalgamated under'

*Unified
Norman
kingdom of
Southern
Italy and
Sicily—a
most advanced
state in
Western
Europe*

the patronage of the kings 'to produce the most dazzling results'.

*Efficient
political
administra-
tion of the
Norman
kingdom*

Efficient political administration run by professional bureaucracy of specialists, taken from the non-feudal class held firmly the otherwise conglomerate and cosmopolitan Norman state. The government of this state stood well in advance of its contemporaries. Its king legislated at a time when law-making was rare, established a bureaucracy while other European states were thoroughly feudalised, and possessed a splendid capital when other courts in Europe were ambulatory.

*Inheritance
of the
Norman
kingdom of
South Italy
and Sicily
made the
empire a
Mediterra-
nean power*

The acquisition of such a splendid kingdom promised to make the empire a Mediterranean power. It was an alluring prospect which Henry VI was from the first bent on realising. But it was no easy job, for in the Norman kingdom there was a party opposed to the Hohenstaufen inheritance. The papacy lent its support to this party. The English royal house was also connected by marriage with the Welfs and the alliance against the Hohenstaufens also included it. The combination against Henry VI placed Tancred a stepbrother of the dead king to the throne. In the mean time Henry the Lion, the leader of the Welfs returned from exile and was trying to regain his lost position in Germany. The alliance of papacy, Sicily, England and the Welfs was further strengthened by the adherence of the nobility of the lower Rhine under the leadership of the archbishop of Cologne.

Undaunted Henry VI set himself to break this international combination. In 1191 he led an expedition to Italy which brought him the imperial crown. But his campaign against Tancred did not succeed. In the next year Richard the Lion-hearted who was one of the allies against Henry VI was arrested near Vienna on his return journey from the third crusade and was compelled to turn over to the

emperor's side and become the German emperor's vassal for England and required military service of him against the Welfs and Sicily. But ultimately Richard's service was not asked for and he was released for a huge money ransom. But hardly things were made ready for expedition against Sicily, Tancred died (1194). The campaign against the Normans thereby, turned into a triumphal procession through Southern Italy, across the strait of Messina and along the Sicilian coast to Palermo. On the Christmas day of 1194 Henry VI, the German king and Roman emperor, was crowned king of Sicily, Apulia and Calabria.

Crowning of Henry as German king, Roman Emperor, and crowned king of Sicily and Southern Italy (1194)

Henry's grand success in Southern Italy and Sicily only whetted his ambition and he was determined now to make the Holy Roman Empire, with Germany, North, Central and Southern Italy and Sicily, hereditary in the Hohenstaufen house. In the year of his success (1194) Constance gave birth to a son—Frederick II whom Henry VI sought to be crowned by the pope as the next emperor. But his plan was frustrated by the opposition of the archbishop of Cologne whose prerogative it was to conduct at least a formal election of the German king, as also by the refusal of the pope to proceed with the coronation of the infant. Two years later Frederick II was elected by the German princes *king of the Romans*, a title usually given to an emperor after his coronation by the pope.

Henry's attempt to make the Holy Roman empire hereditary in the Hohenstaufen house

Frederick II —son of Henry elected king of the German princes

Henry VI now pursued the policy of the Norman kingdom since the days of Guiscard, namely, the conquest of Byzantine territory. His plan was to bring the Byzantine throne to the Hohenstaufens through marriage. This plan, however, did not succeed, although he managed to collect tribute from Constantinople and received homage from the kings of little Armenia and Cyprus. The tributes paid by the Mohammedan princes of North Africa to the Norman kingdom were now paid to Henry VI.

Henry VI's policy of conquest of Byzantine territory

Denmark recognised his overlordship. On the Eastern frontier he kept Bohemia and Hungary still dependent on him. "Never had Germany been a world power of such a magnitude.

Leadership of the Crusade Lastly, imitating his father Henry wanted to confirm his leadership by taking lead in a crusade. But he died in the midst of his plan (1197).

Rivalry between the Welfs and the Waiblings **7/Civil War after Henry's death :** The death of Henry VI was perhaps the greatest cataclysm in the history of Germany. The old rivalry between the Welfs and the Waiblings broke out in Germany. Election of Frederick II by the German princes in 1196 was ignored and both the Welfs and the Waiblings put up their kings (1198). The Waiblings, that is, the Hohenstaufen party elected Philip, Duke of Swabia as king while the Welfs elected Otto of Brunswick as king Otto IV. Otto was the son of Henry the Lion. Germany was torn asunder by a civil war between these two opposing parties for long fourteen years. Lay and ecclesiastical nobles fished in the troubled waters and received grants of lands from one or the other party on promise of support. But matters turned for the worse when mother of Otto IV, who was a sister of Richard the Lion-hearted of England requisitioned English help which was readily forthcoming, for, Richard did not forget the treatment he had once received at the hands of the Hohenstaufen king Henry VI. The rival king Philip of Swabia naturally turned to Philip Augustus of France, who was a sworn enemy of Richard of England. Thus the civil war assumed international character.

Germany torn asunder by civil war

Widespread hostility to the Germans in Italy In Italy also Henry VI's death was followed by a widespread hostility to the Germans. Constance, mother of Frederick II, sought to save the Norman kingdom for her son, and this she did by relinquishing the royal control over the Sicilian church to the pope. At her death she left the guardianship of her son to

the newly elected Pope Innocent III. Historians differ as to the upbringing and education of boy Frederick II. While some remark that 'the boy Frederick was left to grow up without much guidance, like any Sicilian lad, in the streets and market places of Palermo', others mention that Innocent III 'performed his duties towards the boy with great conscientiousness, supplying him with the ablest teachers, giving the best education possible, caring for his interest in Sicily and protecting him against his rebellious subjects'.

Pope Innocent III's guardianship of boy Frederick II

In Germany Innocent recognised Otto IV as the rightful king for which Otto had to pay dearly. He had to recognise the independence of the papal states in Italy and free the German church from royal control. He had also to resign all rights given to the king, by the Concordat of Worms 1122. But Otto's recognition by Innocent III could not save his position in Germany. Influence and lands of the Hohenstaufens were too large to be set-off by the papal support. Further, Philip of Swabia was intensely popular. Innocent did not hesitate to change sides when he found that Otto's cause was nearly lost. He recognised Philip of Swabia as the king of Germany. Negotiations were afoot for Philip's coronation as emperor when all on a sudden Philip was murdered. The German princes having been already too much exhausted due to prolonged civil war and not willing to bring into German politics the ward of Innocent III, Frederick, got Otto IV married to the widowed princess of the Hohenstaufen house and elected him German king. Otto renewed his earlier pledges to the pope and was crowned emperor in 1209. But soon Otto IV began to pursue the German imperial policy having been strengthened by the union of the Welfs and the Hohenstaufens by his marriage of the widow of Philip. He also reclaimed the Tuscan lands of Matilda which he had previously abandoned to the

Otto IV recognised king by Pope Innocent III

German princes reasons for siding with Otto IV

pope, and launched a campaign to dispossess Frederick II of his inheritance and* thereby to reunite Sicily and Southern Italy to the empire.

*Pope Innocent
turns to
Frederick II*

Frederick II was by now sixteen years old, and it was to him that Innocent III now turned, fearing that Otto IV would follow the wonted German imperial policy towards the pope and Italy. Innocent contrived with Philip Augustus of France and the disaffected German nobles to re-elect Frederick II as the German king. In the mean time Otto IV was nearly finishing his Sicilian campaign when news reached him that Frederick had been welcomed by the Germans and recrowned at Aachen (Dec. 1212) as the king of the Romans—a title used by the Holy Roman Emperor. Nothing but sword could decide the issue between Otto IV and Frederick. In the battle of Bouvines (1214) Frederick with the help of Philip Augustus, defeated the English-Welf alliance. Otto's hopes, for the matter of that all Welf hopes, were blasted and Frederick had no difficulty in Germany. Frederick had in the mean time abandoned the German church to the papacy which amounted to a complete victory for Innocent III. It was also agreed that, Germany and Sicily were not to be reunited. Innocent III confirmed Frederick II to his throne and deposed and excommunicated Otto IV at his Fourth Lateran Council in 1215.

*Innocent III
deposed and
excommuni-
cated Otto IV*

*Innocent's
death:
Succeeded by
outstanding
Popes*

The death of Innocent III in the next year (1216) brought on the papal throne a succession of outstanding pontiffs like Honourous III, Gregory IX, and Innocent IV with whom Frederick had to reckon throughout his reign.

*Most gifted
of European
monarchs*

8/Frederick II (1215-50) : Frederick II was 'incomparably the most gifted, the best educated, and the most complex among European monarchs of the middle ages'. He was easily one of the greatest figures of European history.

Frederick II had to make good his claim to the German kingship with the help of Philip Augustus of France and Pope Innocent III. Yet by a strange irony of fate the papacy had to fight incessantly against Frederick for its rights. Frederick inherited kingdom of Sicily which was traditionally a centralised, non-feudal absolute monarchy. On the other hand, Germany which also he had inherited, being the son of Frederick I, was traditionally a universal feudal empire. To harmonise these two parts of his empire and to combine those different, rather contradictory traditions into one system was almost an impossible task.

In Germany for past many decades political power had slipped into the hands of the nobility, both lay and ecclesiastical, and nothing less than a revolution could alter the situation.

In northern and north-central Italy communes had usurped power during the recent confusion. In central Italy the papal domination was unquestioned and even on the way to expansion. In southern Italy and Sicily the death of Henry VI and soon after of Constance, chaos reigned supreme and encroachments on crown property were common.

Frederick II was crowned emperor at Rome in 1220. But he did not take long to realise the futility of any attempt to reduce the whole empire to one uniform system. Frederick saw that only solid basis of his power could be the Norman kingdom of south Italy and Sicily where despite recent confusion, long-standing custom of a centralised government of a non-feudal character, supported by an efficient bureaucracy might be revived. From that stronghold it might be possible to bring central and north Italy under control with Rome as capital. But in this he had to reckon with his greatest enemy the papacy, to whom it was absolutely necessary to destroy the Hohenstaufens root and branch in order to

*Papacy's
incessant fight
against
Frederick II*

*In Germany
political
power was
held by the
nobility—lay
and ecclesiastical*

*In north-
central Italy
power held
by communes
—in central
Italy by the
pope*

*Frederick II
crowned
Emperor at
Rome (1220):
Futility of
his attempt
to bring the
empire under
a uniform
system*

free itself from their crushing embrace from southern Italy. It was a strange coincidence of history that all the popes that Frederick II had to deal with were astute politicians and were capable of manipulating all the forces of opposition to Frederick.

*Frederick's
Italian policy
not motivated
by any desire
to control the
Pope*

Frederick's Italian policy was not, at least originally, guided by any desire to establish overlordship over the Pope. His aim was to establish a universal empire in which the Pope and the emperor—the church and the state, would occupy positions of equal rights side by side. This guaranteed, he only desired peace and co-operation. But the Italian popes would never grant him peace, far less co-operation. On the contrary the popes demanded submission and for the most part, they were the aggressors, and Frederick was driven to challenge them on their own ground and claimed supremacy over them as they did over him.

*Frederick II
only half-
German*

Frederick realised his powerlessness in destroying the overgrown feudal princes of Germany and the only course open to him was to leave Germany to her fate. Nor could Frederick be regarded as a German king, he was at best only half-German and after his coronation as emperor he returned to Germany only once. His German policy was motivated by his desire to obtain the military support of the German princes by confirming their sovereign rights, even by increasing the measure of their independence. To him Germany was no more than a province of his vast empire. He looked on it rather as a source of influence, power and army recruits than as a state to be ruled. Even before leaving for his coronation in 1220 Frederick II ensured the continuation of the empire by securing the election of his son Henry as German king and the next Holy Roman Emperor by lavish concessions to both the lay and ecclesiastical princes.

But the disastrous nature of concessions to the

German lay and ecclesiastical princes soon found open opposition from Frederick II's son Henry who had attained his majority in 1228. He pursued a policy quite the opposite of his father's for he was more interested in being a German king than Roman emperor. While Frederick leant on the princes, Henry sought to revive the royal power in Germany by checking the autonomy of the princes and by encouraging the towns. But Frederick went his wonted way and even the lords and lesser princes demanded the same type of autonomy as was being enjoyed by the bigger princes. The power of the German king was practically gone. The privileges granted to the German princes by Frederick in 1231 and confirmed in 1232 were so distasteful to Henry that he revolted against his father and made common cause with the Lombard League. Frederick came to Germany, got Henry arrested and deposed, and put him in the prison at Apulia where he died. Frederick's eldest son Conrad IV was made the German king and emperor elect. Frederick in order to pacify Germany made peace with the Welfs and recognised their rights on their estates to be held as fief of the emperor. Frederick succeeded in taking Austria and Styria and keeping them in his own hands for some time. An imperial assembly was summoned in Mainz and measures were taken to limit the right of private warfare and for the maintenance of peace in Germany.

*Frederick II's
policy
contrary to
his father's*

*Conrad IV
—German
king*

Frederick sought to follow his father and grandfather by leading the crusading movement which was now in serious neglect. But the only preparation that he made for the crusade was to marry Isabella, the heiress of the kingdom of Jerusalem. But he did nothing more. Pope Honorious III accused him of breaking his vow to proceed on holy war and Frederick promised to go by 1227 to avoid papal displeasure. In 1227 Frederick fell seriously ill on his way to Jerusalem and returned. Gregory IX who

*Followed
grandfather
and father's
footsteps—
leadership of
crusades*

*Excommuni-
cation of
Frederick II*

*Frederick's
success in
obtaining
possession of
Jerusalem:
Pope Gregory's
opposition*

*Pope Gregory's
despatch of
mercenaries
to southern
Italy to
conquer
Frederick's
dominions*

*The Constitu-
tion of Melfi*

was the Pope now, at once excommunicated Frederick interpreting his sickness as mere trickery. But on recovery Frederick proceeded on his crusading mission, ignoring the fact of papal excommunication. Frederick II was, however, in no mood to wage any war, but thought of acquiring the kingdom of Jerusalem through friendly negotiations with the Sultan of Egypt, Al Kamil. His negotiations were astonishingly successful, Gregory IX would not pardon Frederick for leading a holy war although under excommunication and further for not going on crusade as promised earlier, and while he actually went, for opening negotiation with the infidel. Gregory IX placed Frederick's kingdom of Jerusalem under an interdict. This was how Frederick and the papacy entered into a continuous war which lasted during the rest of Frederick's lifetime.

Gregory IX's unrelenting attitude marked the beginning of a long chapter of hostility between the emperor and the papacy in which initiative was taken by Gregory himself. During Frederick's absence on account of the crusade Gregory sent the first papal mercenaries even known, to make war on his dominions in southern Italy. The success of this papal expeditionary force was a matter of much jubilation to Gregory IX. The imperial troops, on the other hand, were trying to recover the territory recently lost to the papacy. On his return Frederick pushed out the papal mercenaries from his kingdom and without precipitating issue with the pope opened negotiation with him. The pope withdrew the decree of excommunication from the head of Frederick and the latter made liberal concessions to the pope, limiting his control over the Sicilian church. But there was nothing to limit Frederick's plan of consolidating Sicily and Italy.

With regard to Sicily Frederick had begun the work of reorganisation as early as 1220. In 1231 he issued *The Constitution of Melfi* by which he centralised

the government under a bureaucratic absolutism suggestive of the benevolent despotism of the eighteenth century Europe. Influence of the Roman law, abolition of all vestiges of local feudalism, issue of new regulations made the administration in Sicily the most modern in Europe. Justice was regarded as sacred and sale of any office sinful. In short, Frederick was labouring to create what might be called modern national state in Sicily. Education was encouraged and young men were obliged to attend the University of Naples.

*Frederick's
encouragement
to education*

Against the Lombard towns Frederick's initial attempts were unavailing. He twice failed to compel the Lombard towns to obey the terms of the Treaty of Constance. But Frederick could not let these towns go like the German princedoms or to become autonomous. He took up war against Lombard towns in right earnest and after defeating the Lombards at the battle of Cortenuova in 1237 brought them under his feet. Some of the towns, however, held out and could not be reduced due to Frederick's inability to proceed against them immediately.

*Battle of
Cortenuova
(1237)*

Frederick's victory over the Lombard towns encouraged him to address the Romans a communication detailing far-reaching plan of restoring the imperial glory of Rome; to divide Rome into provinces under Roman governors. This was a threat to Gregory IX. It became obvious to him that Frederick's plan would mean extinction of papal states in Italy. The fear was all the more because Frederick did not recognise the claim of the papacy to universal supremacy and scornfully refused mediation of the pope when at war with the Lombard towns. Frederick's marrying his son with the heiress of Sardinia was another reason for Gregory's displeasure. For, he regarded Sardinia as a papal fief which as a result of this marriage would cease to be so. Pope used his weapon against Frederick, whom he excommunicated (1239).

*Frederick's
victory over
Lombard
towns:
Threat to
Gregory IX*

*Frederick's
excommuni-
cation*

*Pope's
propaganda
against
Frederick II*

This was followed by extravagant propaganda against Frederick, in which all conceivable and inconceivable things were introduced to create a public opinion against him. Frederick was even accused of propagating a new religion, perhaps under Muslim influence. Counter-propaganda was made by Frederick. He appealed to the cardinals to summon a council to settle the questions at issue and to reform the church along the lines of apostolic poverty. Frederick succeeded in winning over the Italian towns arguing that they would be unmindful of their own advantages if they preferred the luxury of independence to the repose of peace and justice. He then took steps to reorganise north Italy along the Sicilian system. The whole administration of northern Italy was fused with that of southern Italy into one system dominated by the emperor.

*Prospect of
conquest of
the papal
states by
Frederick II:
Pope terrified*

Pope Gregory IX was now terrified at the prospect of the conquest of the papal states by Frederick. He summoned a council at Rome in 1241 with no other purpose than to depose Frederick. Frederick decided to prevent the meeting of the council. Foreign prelates were intercepted under Frederick's orders one hundred prelates, including three papal legates, two cardinals and several generals of the leading monastic orders were Frederick's prisoners. Frederick also gathered troops for a direct attack on Rome. Papal authority in Spoleto, Ancona, Tuscany, etc., began to collapse at the news of Frederick's success and these were joined to the empire. Frederick was at the peak of his success. Gregory IX died of the shock of what had happened, but with his death he snatched victory from the hands of Frederick. For, during nearly two years to follow Frederick failed to place any friendly pope on the papal throne. The successor of Gregory IX was Innocent IV who was an eminent jurist, a former professor of law at the University of Bologna. He was cold-hearted, ruthless and unrelenting. Frederick

*Frederick
reached peak
of his success*

made liberal concession to the papacy for the sake of peace but Innocent set himself earnestly to destroy the empire and this he wanted to do from outside Rome. In 1245 he summoned a council at Lyons in which the emperor was deposed. Frederick could not prevent this council from meeting nor did he anticipate such measure from Innocent IV after the concessions he had made to the papacy. He decided to pursue the papal party with greater zeal and fury than ever. 'We shall wield the sword of vengeance more cruelly against them', he is reported to have remarked.

*Pope
Innocent IV's
deposition of
the emperor*

The next five years were of desperate struggle between the papacy and the emperor. Pope got Henry an anti-king elected to the throne of Germany, got Frederick's son Conrad IV defeated and on the death of Henry obtained the election of Count William of Holland elected German king. Papal threats of deposition, excommunication, etc., drove the German princes away from the emperor's camp and yet despite the general disaffection created in among the Germans, the Hohenstaufen cause was not completely ruined in Germany.

*Struggle
between the
papacy and
the emperor*

In Italy the papal party conspired to murder the emperor and his important lieutenants. Frederick barely escaped being poisoned by his own physician and the conspiracy was revealed. Needless to remark it was put down in cold blood. But in spite of severe defeat outside Parma and temporary losses elsewhere Frederick held his own strongly enough in northern and central Italy. In the midst of his plan for a fourth marriage to ensure permanence of his dynasty, Frederick died of an attack of severe dysentery in southern Italy in 1250.

*Conspiracy to
murder
Frederick II*

*Frederick's
death*

9/Estimate of Frederick II, Wonder of the World : Frederick II was by far the most gifted and enlightened of the crowned heads of Europe of the middle ages. He was easily one of the greatest

Frederick II figures of European history. "Like St. Francis of
—a great Assisi and Roger Bacon, his contemporaries, and like
transitional Dante who followed him, he was one of the great
figure transitional figures of the thirteenth century, who
 summed up in their own persons the best and worst
 features of their age, and prefigured what was to
 come." "Statesman and philosopher, politician
 and soldier, general and jurist, poet and diplomat,
 architect, zoologist, mathematician, the master of
 six or it might be nine languages, who collected
 ancient works of art, directed a school of sculpture,
 made independent researches in natural science,
 and organised states, this supremely versatile man
Genius of the was the *Genius of the Renaissance* on the throne of
Renaissance : Emperors." To his contemporaries, naturally, he
Stupor mundi was *stupor mundi*, i.e. the wonder of the world.

By birth a half-German and half-Norman Frederick, in his character and temperament, was more a Latin or Mediterranean than a northern. His
Half-German, early life having been spent in Sicily he naturally
Half-Norman was to a large extent a Sicilian. It was primarily as the king of Sicily that he was feared, hated and fought against by the popes.

Task of Frederick was doubly difficult for he had
His difficult to harmonize the universal feudal empire of Ger-
task many with the non-feudal, centralised and highly efficient bureaucratic system of administration of the Norman kingdom of southern Italy and Sicily. His difficulties were added to by the resistance of the Lombard towns and the papacy in Italy and the autonomous, rather sovereign princes, both lay and ecclesiastical, of Germany.

Having been temperamentally and by upbringing less than half-German and having realised the futility of any attempt to destroy the power of the feudal princes of Germany Frederick left it to its own fate. He only ensured support, specially military, from the German princes by grant of lavish concessions.

Frederick's promise to lead the crusade, following the example of his father and grandfather, which was delayed in redëeming, brought on him the papal wrath. His astute diplomatic move to bring about a political settlement through marriage, of the question of occupying Jerusalem was not to the liking of the pope who threatened him with excommunication unless he would proceed on crusade in 1227. Illness prevented Frederick to continue his expedition and his return to a healthy resort for recovery was interpreted by the pope as mere trickery and he was excommunicated. Frederick did not bother about the papal punishment and on recovery resumed his crusading expedition and accomplished through negotiations with Al Kamil, Sultan of Egypt what could not have been done through war. Pope was astonished at his success, but rewarded Frederick by putting his kingdom of Jerusalem, which he had gained through marriage, under an interdict. It was in this way that the conflict between Frederick and the papacy began. Frederick's attempts at bringing the hostile Lombard towns to his feet succeeded after his initial failure. This was followed by his entry into north Italy like the Roman Emperor and reorganising the northern Italy after the old Roman fashion, placing one province under a Roman governor.

Frederick's inability to proceed on crusade: Pope excommunicated him

Frederick II proceeded on crusade: His success

All this was disconcerting to the pope who fearing the loss of control over the city of Rome issued a second excommunication upon Frederick. But Frederick succeeded in reorganising Italian towns except a few that still held out, and northern and central Italy on the Sicilian system. The pope sought to punish Frederick by summoning a full church council. But by a masterstroke Frederick intercepted the prelates on their way to the council. This shock cost pope Gregory IX his life. But unfortunately, it was the misfortune of Frederick that all the popes that he had to deal with were men of

Pope's attempt to punish Frederick II

*Innocent IV
carried the
fight against
Frederick II*

extraordinary courage and strength. The next pope Innocent IV, a former professor of law at the University of Bologna and an eminent jurist took up the challenge of Frederick. Despite lavish concessions made by Frederick to the new Pope for the sake of peace, the latter withdrew out of Rome and stealthily summoned a church council in 1225 in which he deposed Frederick. Not only that, Innocent IV carried the fight against Frederick into Germany where he got Frederick's son Conrad IV deposed and defeated and placed Henry of Thuringia on the German throne. On Henry's death Count William was put up on the throne. In Italy the papal party resorted to a conspiracy to murder the emperor. Even the physician of the emperor, his chancellors and nearest officials were secretly won over. Frederick barely escaped being poisoned by his own physician. The conspiracy was, however, revealed and put down in cold blood. In spite of his defeat at the hands of his enemies near Parma and other temporary losses, and the loss of his son Enzo, the emperor maintained his hold on northern and central Italy. He also planned to ensure permanence of his dynasty through a fourth marriage when he died in the midst of his plan 1250.

*Frederick
must be
credited with
superhuman
abilities*

Considering the complexities of his problems and the magnitude of the ideals he sought to subserve, as also the measure of success attained, one has to credit Frederick with superhuman abilities. "He understood the question at issue between himself and the pope; he knew that it was for his right to rule the empire independently that he was fighting. All the same it is possible to find many contrasts in him, if not contradictions. He was of the Middle Ages, and belonged at the same time to the Modern Period." He was free in his religious ideas, tolerating all religions in his kingdom of Sicily yet persecuting the heretics in Germany. But it must be remarked that he was most modern in that he was

not controlled by religious consideration but wholly by political motive. In a feudal age he was free from feudal ideas and his kingdom in Sicily is regarded as the first modern state and he as the first modern king. His *Constitution of Melfi* by which he reorganised his southern kingdom was undoubtedly the 'most conspicuous and constructive single piece of statecraft that the Middle Ages knew. Its keynote is a centralised, bureaucratic absolutism by divine right, suggestive of the benevolent despotism of the enlightened monarchs of the eighteenth century.'

*Constitution
of Melfi*

In culture and learning Frederick II surpassed all emperors who preceded him. He spoke Latin, Italian, French, German, Greek and Arabic. He was a poet himself and kept himself surrounded by poets. He established—the University of Naples and encouraged education of his subjects. He had zoological gardens to satisfy his scientific curiosity. He belonged to the class of independent thinkers of which Abelard was also a member.

*Most cultured
of all
emperors*

Economic prosperity was likewise Frederick's care. He built many new cities and bridges. Agriculture and trade were encouraged by him, tariffs were reduced and annual fairs were held. "Under his vigorous and to some extent liberal administration, his kingdom surpassed in prosperity and civilisation all its neighbours."

*Frederick's
care for
economic
prosperity*

The above resume of the qualities of Frederick II and his exploits leave us in no doubt that Frederick was indeed a *stupor mundi*, i.e. the wonder of the world, as one of his contemporaries chose to call him.

*Frederick
doubtlessly
a stupor
mundi*

10/Pontificate of Innocent III (1198-1216) : 'For the middle ages' it has been remarked 'the thirteenth century must be regarded as the period of synthesis and perfection, whose best embodiment is the greatest of medieval popes, Innocent III'. On the death of Pope Celestine III, the youngest

*Innocent III
greatest of
medieval popes*

Cardinal, Lothar dei Conti became Pope as Innocent III (1198). During the few years of Innocent III's pontificate, the entire western European world seemed to revolve round him, for he had not only influence but power.

His character

"He was a legislator and a consummate lawyer, an organising administrator of singular efficiency, but above all a statesman and diplomatist, resolute and versatile with a width of view and a readiness in emergency unequalled in his generation. ... Daring and sober prudence were strangely combined in him. Few have equalled him in the capacity to administer, judge, negotiate and decide in affairs political and ecclesiastical involving all Europe." It is said that Innocent was perhaps influenced by the tradition of ancient Roman Empire, with its centralised autocracy, its instinct for law and equity and its solicitude for its subjects. Innocent III warred on turbulence and indiscipline. He harmonised his political and legal temperament with his love of power.

His aims

Innocent III was a jurist, trained in the schools of Paris and Bologna, and for some time professor of law at the University of Bologna. He looked at everything from the jurist's point of view and sought to reduce to a legal form and basis all claims of the papacy. He was concerned less for religion as for the power of the papacy. He was the most politically minded pope. Innocent III's main object was to restore the temporal power of the papacy, assailed ever since Frederick Barbarossa had embarked on a policy of territorial reconstruction. He was a profound believer in the highest curial doctrine of papal power to guide both the church and the world. He was not personally ambitious and persuaded to believe that in everything he did, he acted in accordance with the plans of God and to the best interests of the church. He believed that the government of the world was a theocracy and that in it, the *vicar* of

God was not the emperor but the Pope himself. He pushed to the extreme the ideas of the supremacy of the papacy over all temporal authorities like princes and emperors. In that he was an unbending opponent of the Hohenstaufen dynasty, determined to destroy the unity of Sicily and the Empire and imperial position in central Italy for which the Hohenstaufens stood. He conceived the world as Augustinian *City of God* with its seat at Rome in Italy. The pope who was the vicar of God on earth was to be absolute and free from control of all foreigners. As such, to his mind, the Italian peninsula was not to be united with the empire. The papal state must be strengthened. He also believed that all states of the west must be put under the control of the papacy. Neither the king nor the emperor was to be independent of the pope, but must submit to him completely. According to Innocent III the priestly power (Sacerdotium) was the sun and the royal power (regnum) was the moon. While the king rules over his kingdom, the pope rules over the whole world. Priestly power, as he said, came by divine creation but the royal power came by man's cunning. Again "princes have power in earth, priests over the soul. As much as the soul is worthier than the body, so much worthier is the priesthood than the monarchy."

*His concept:-
City of God*

*Sacerdotium
—the sun,
Regnum—
the moon*

The recovery of the Holy Land from the Muslims was also in his plan. The Greek church was to be purified and reunited to the church of the west.

*His plan of
recovery of
the Holy Land*

Innocent freed the German church from the state and vindicated the pope's right to investigate all candidates for the German throne. He mediated in the disputed election of the German king, compelled Frederick to hold Sicily as a papal fief.

*German
church freed
from the state*

In central Italy Innocent made a league with the cities, drove out the emperor's officials and set his own in their place. In 1199 Innocent succeeded in

*His power
over France
and England*

imposing a truce upon Philip Augustus of France and Richard I of England. Innocent forced king John of England to accept Stephen Langton as archbishop of Canterbury. It has been remarked that this victory of Innocent made Gregory VII's so-called victory over Henry IV at Canossa seem almost trifling.

*His authority
acknowledged
by the kings
of Portugal,
Aragon—
partially over
Poland,
Bulgaria,
Denmark,
Norway,
Sweden, etc.
Pope
Innocent III
and the fourth
crusade*

The king of Portugal acknowledged his authority and paid him tribute; the king of Aragon became his feudal subject and the king of Leon was compelled to obey him. In Hungary, Poland, Bulgaria, Denmark, Norway and Sweden Innocent made good, at least partially, his claims to supremacy over temporal matters.

Under Innocent it appeared that the papacy would come to possess the entire Christian east. No pope, least Pope Innocent III could neglect the crusade. For this purpose he demanded a fortieth of the clerical incomes in 1199. In 1202 the crusaders were fully mustered at Venice. The Republic of Venice contrived to intern the crusaders on an island and offered them the choice of paying for their stay at Venice or to reconquer the Zara, the rebel city under Venice. The crusaders accepted the second choice. Pope Innocent denounced the scandalous perversion of the crusading army and excommunicated it. He forbade the fourth crusade to proceed against Constantinople but once the city was taken by the crusaders and a Latin church established there, he began to hope for extension of papal authority over the whole east. But the rapid disintegration of the Latin empire at Constantinople dashed his hopes to the ground. Innocent III's dealings with France and England arose from ecclesiastical causes, although in these cases as well his bent towards political measures and statecraft was manifest. The question of King Philip's marriage of Agnes despite his previous marriage with Igneborg was the matter in which Innocent succeeded in

*His hope for
extension of
papal authority
over whole east*

*His dealings
with France
and England*

forcing Philip to accept Igneborg as his wife. The situation was of course made easier by Agnes' timely death. Yet the matter needed both caution and courage which Innocent displayed in proper measure. The English king John was likewise made to surrender to Innocent III in an abject manner. Innocent's power stood supreme. End of the twelfth century was characterised by heresy in many parts of Italy and France. Its centre became Languedoc, *i.e.* Province in southern France, where taking its name from the town of Albi it came to be known as Albigensian heresy. It assumed such proportions that although all persuasions had failed earlier, Pope Innocent agreed to a crusade against the Albigensians. He summoned the Lateran Council in 1215 to deal with the Albigenses heresy. It was declared that heresy was a crime, fit to be punished with death. This council condemned Amaury and David—two exponents of Pantheism, growth of which the end of the twelfth century had witnessed. They had earlier been condemned at a Synod of Paris in 1210. In the same council doctrines of transubstantiation and auricular confession were promulgated. These were the sheet-anchor of Catholic Church. Two distinct programmes were also announced by Innocent in this council—the recovery of the Holy Land and reform of the church. A grand crusade was fixed for the year 1217 but Innocent did not live to see it.

*Summoning
of Lateran
Council
(1215):
Step against
Albigenses
heresy*

Innocent III had great sympathy with the aspirations of the pious and low born laity. He had also the knowledge of clerical luxury and negligence which provoked movements. But he insisted on obedience to papacy and hierarchy, for, to him submission was the test of orthodoxy. He insisted on king of Hungary to root out the Catharan heretics of Bosnia and Dalmatia. It needed a personal visit by the Pope to effect the banishment of the Catharans.

*Innocent's
sympathy
with the poor
Catharan
heresy*

In 1199, Innocent, the first of popes who levied directly an income-tax on the clergy and monasteries.

*Financial
levy*

A levy of a fortieth of the clerical incomes was also made by Pope Innocent. These were for financing the fourth crusade.

*Limitations
of his success*

“Yet with all his ability and merits, however, he was but half successful in his endeavour to dominate the lay potentates and he transmitted in a heightened form to his successors the secular methods and absorption in temporal aims which were to be the bane of the spiritual mission of the papacy.”

*Apparently
a completely
successful
career, but
alienated
affection of
the people*

*People of
southern
France and
England
against him :
Yet Innocent
III greatest
maker of the
papacy*

Apparently Innocent III's pontificate was a complete success. He had won a victory in every case over the temporal powers. He had succeeded in establishing papal supremacy. In fact, he was the most imperial pope. But he had alienated the affection of the people. The cruelty perpetrated in suppressing the Albigenses heresy turned the whole southern France against him. His victory over John of England filled the English people with hatred of him. Similar was the result of his policy in Germany. The papacy lost in spiritual power under him because he made politics the principal matter. Yet Innocent III was the greatest maker of the papacy. He gave fullest expression to the political claims of the papacy and did much to realise them. Under him some of the most important doctrines, rites and practices of the catholic church were established. The code of canon law, although not begun under him, was thoroughly according to his ideas. Innocent's pontificate marked a new era in the history of the Roman Curia. The chancery was reorganised into departments and manned by persons trained in law and office routine. It was he who introduced the system of papal registers which have been preserved. Rules for detection of forgery, execution of documents in different ways, elaboration of the method of hearing appeals were introduced by him. Delay and venality crept into this elaborate system inevitably, yet it cannot be denied that acute and logical legal justice meted

out by the Curia was unequalled by contemporaries. Innocent had always the sense of plentitude of papal powers and he insisted on annual confession, narrowed the limits of consanguinity as a bar to marriage, regulated the methods of elections to bishoprics and qualifications of the clergy and tried to check the decline and disorder of the clerical life. Invention of new rules for religious life was forbidden but some changes were introduced into the old fashioned Benedictine and Augustinian Rules.

*Innocent's
church
reorganisation*

11/Fall of the Hohenstaufens : It was with the death of Frederick II in 1250, that the Hohenstaufen house fell for all practical purposes. The popes carried on the struggle with the successors of Frederick II till the Hohenstaufen house was extinguished.

*With Frederick
II's death the
house of the
Hohenstaufens
fell for all practical
purposes*

Frederick left the empire to his son Conrad IV with his natural son Manfred as regent in Sicily. Conrad, however, died in 1254 leaving Conradino to succeed him. He was not of age and was placed under the guardianship of his grandfather on the mother's side. Manfred, however, succeeded, in the face of papal machinations, to holding Sicily and nearly recovering such position in Italy as Frederick II had held. Two popes Urban IV and Clement IV, perfected a plan of inviting Charles of Anjou, brother of the French king Louis IX to dispossess Manfred of his kingdom. Ambitious prince Charles invaded Manfred's kingdom in 1266 and defeated and killed him in the battle of Benevento and stepped into the shoes of the Hohenstaufens. But the Italians reacted by inviting the young Hohenstaufen king Conradino from Germany. But the French army defeated the imperial army and captured Conradino who was taken to Naples and beheaded with the approval of Pope Clement IV. In this way the struggle between the empire and the papacy ended in papal victory and extinction of the house of Hohenstaufens (1268).

Conrad IV

*Battle of
Benevento :
Charles of
Anjou stepped
into the shoes
of the Hohenstaufens*

CHAPTER 14

Monarchical States

1/England : IN THE MIDDLE AGES two distinct political tendencies are discernible in the European states. These were the centripetal forces working towards national monarchies and centrifugal forces contributing to fissiparous political tendencies preventing national unity. While in England, Denmark and Sweden, France and Spain the tendency was towards political union and national monarchies, in Italy and Germany a reverse process was at work. England was politically united in the ninth century and the monarchy there acquired sufficient strength due to the Norman genius shown by William the Conqueror. The former *Witanagemot* was changed into Great Council, *i.e.* *Magnum Concillium*. Feudalism was kept in check by anti-feudal measures taken by William and Henry II. William's *Domesday Survey* furnished him with the basis of levy and collection of royal dues. Castles built in large towns put the recalcitrants under control. Although there was some slackness during the rule of William I's successors like William II (Rufus), Henry I, Stephen de Blois, yet it was more than set right by Henry II whose anti-feudal measures strengthened the English monarchy. Both the nobility and the church which stood in his way were humbled by him. The reign of his son Richard I who was long absent from his country as he had proceeded on crusade was of negative importance to the history of England. His absence from the country gave the English local independence an opportunity to grow, the result of which could be seen in the signing of *Magna Carta* under John (1215). Under Henry III England had the representatives of the commoners in the Parliament which was called not by the king

*William the
Conqueror*

*John and
Magna Carta*

but by Simon de Montfort. But never after this, representatives of the commoners were excluded from the Parliament. Henry III's son gave legal sanctity to this representation of the commoners in his *Model Parliament*. He had also extended the royal domain by the conquest of Scotland and Wales.

The strength that the English monarchy had acquired by now could not be dissipated despite the *Hundred Years' War* with France in which England lost her continental possessions. Nor was it completely shattered by the *Wars of the Roses*, i.e. struggle between the different descendants of Edward III. Whatever of the English monarchy that remained till the end of the *Wars of the Roses* served as a nucleus of a strong monarchy which Henry Tudor built up after his victory over his rivals. True that Henry had found the situation favourable for building up a strong Tudor despotism as the great baronial houses had become impoverished and weak due to prolonged warfare, yet by then the English people had developed enough confidence in the merits of a strong monarchy from their own history.

2/Germany : Italy : The picture was altogether different in Germany and Italy. Feudalism was a strange system capable of following equally two diametrically opposite lines of developments. It originated to satisfy the barest necessities of government when no protection against the external inroads could be rendered from the centre. In certain countries feudalism had indeed usurped the powers of the monarchy and rendered it impotent, yet in theory it did not deprive the king of his traditional rights. At all time of feudalism, theoretically the king was the head of the entire feudal system, suzerain of all vassals. In its development feudalism naturally became a challenge to the king-suzerain. The outcome of such a conflict could be the victory either of the king or of the vassals. The victory of

the vassals would necessarily mean victory for decentralisation and localism whereas the victory of the king-suzerain would mean a victory for centralisation and nationalism. "Germany is the best example of the first outcome, France is the best example of the second."

*France and
England
followed
almost
parallel lines
of political
development*

Until the beginning of the thirteenth century France and England had followed almost parallel lines of political development. It was from then that they parted ways, France proceeding in the direction of absolute monarchy, England in the direction of limited monarchy. One really feels curious why Germany did not go in the direction either of France or of England. It may not be possible to return any categorical answer. The source of political strength in medieval age was wealth, intelligence and character. Wealth was needed for creating and maintaining an army and to carry on with administration, intelligence for directing and controlling these and character to balance the particular interests of the ruler with the general interest of the society. While in England and in France these three factors were present, these were not to be found in Germany for long. In fact, at the death of emperor Frederick II in 1250 Germany in its form of government where France was in the tenth century. Notwithstanding the heroic struggle of Frederick II to hold Germany together, the German princes won the final victory over the king. This was the result of the inherent weakness of the German monarchy underneath a superficial display of imposing strength.

*Inherent
weaknesses of
German
monarchy*

*Elective
monarchy*

In the first place, the weakness of the German monarchy lay in its inability to make itself hereditary. Some of the German monarchs succeeded in getting their sons elected and consecrated during their lifetime, but others were not fortunate enough to have any son. Almost every German king held his position to election. The electors in lieu of their

support in election demanded and obtained rights pertaining to their local independence. Further, in absence of hereditary sanction, it was easy to oppose the king or to set up anti-kings as had been done on several occasions in Germany.

Lack of compact royal domain in Germany was another source of weakness of the German monarchy. Crown lands were scattered all over Germany and Italy. Normally, crown lands served as the most important source of strength to the king and worked as nucleus for centralisation of power. But this did not happen in Germany. Again, in order to maintain themselves in power, the German kings made lavish grants of crown lands before a particular dynasty was ended.

*Lack of
royal domain*

There were of course additions to German territories such as Lorraine, Burgundy and parts of Italy. But lack of royal administration and power of enforcement made it impossible for the crown to profit from these additions.

*Lack of royal
administration
and power of
enforcement*

Further, the German kings had no control point where they could entrench themselves and from where they could expand. In fact, the German monarchy had no capital. "The German kings were in possession of rights and lands which they could neither exploit nor they could administer."

Other reasons for the weakness of the German monarchy were (i) the strength of the tribal duchies, which was a source of constant danger to the central government. (ii) Generosity to the church had impoverished the crown and in the bargain created still more feudal principalities. (iii) The investiture contest involved the loss of the ecclesiastical principalities. It was a costly mistake and the sacrifice of the German kings of the German interests to the dream of a Holy Roman Empire was illimitable. (iv) The German kings obliged to compromise with the nobility, with the German church, and with the

*Other reasons:
Strength of
tribal duchies
Generosity to
the Church
impoverished
the Crown
Investiture
contest; Dream
of Holy
Roman Empire*

German kings obliged to compromise with German church and nobility: Common people's interest not looked after papacy, never succeeded in making the monarchy represent the interests of the common people. They failed to secure peace for the peasantry or to ameliorate the condition of the serfs. (v) They also antagonised the Lombard towns and at the same time left the newly growing towns to the mercies of the secular and ecclesiastical lords so that they fought their way to independence.

Antagonism of the Lombard towns The inclusion of Germany in the Holy Roman Empire and the systematic negligence of the German interests by the later emperors in their pursuit for the illusory Roman crown, their crossing and re-crossing of the Alps served as a major factor in keeping Germany disunited and without any national king. The same history continued in the subsequent five centuries before Germany could be nationally united.

History of Italy bore close resemblance with German history The history of Italy bears close resemblance to that of Germany. The inclusion of Italy in the Holy Roman Empire, the Lombard menace and the papal independence, etc., brought for the Italians the same fortune as of the Germans.

Partition of Verdun: Beginning of France **3/Capetian France :** The West-Frankish kingdom formed by the partition treaty of Verdun was the beginning of France. Although under Charles I the Fat, the whole empire of Charles the Great was reunited in 882, the disgraceful bargaining by Charles the Fat with the invading Norsemen disgusted the people as well as the nobles. The nobles of France turned to elect Count Odo of Paris, the hero who fought valiantly against the Norsemen when they besieged Paris. But we may go a little backward and say that the first and the real founder of the house of France was Robert the Strong, father of Odo. Robert was of uncertain lineage whose lands in Neustria, centering about Paris were continually raided by the Britons. It was his son Odo (888-98) who was formally elected king of France by the

French nobles in 888. Thus Robert was the remote ancestor of the Capetian kings. Robert the Strong was popular with the French, he lost his life in resisting the invasion of the Norsemen. But his son Odo was more popular. He also fought vigorously to repel the invasion of the Norsemen. In the mean time, under Charles the Great's weak successors high officials who had made their office hereditary, became a great challenge to Odo. The counts of Anjou, Poitou, Gascony, Flanders and Paris were the most important of such hereditary houses. They were always conspiring to restore Charles the Simple of the Carolingian house on the throne. During his lifetime Odo fought against such conspiracy. But at the time of his death (898) finding that the nobles would restore Charles the Simple in preference to Odo's brother, himself named Charles the Simple as his successor.

Robert the Strong—real founder of the Capetian house

Hereditary houses of Anjou, Poitou, Gascony, Flanders and Paris

Charles the Simple was a tolerably capable man but his simplicity in placing too much confidence in the unpredictable nobles brought him to troubles. The Norsemen invaded France without any respite and even occupied some of the districts on the mouth of the river Seine. In 911 Charles offered his daughter in marriage to Rolf or Rollo, the leader of the invading Norsemen, and also the valley of the lower Seine, if he would settle there and become a Christian. This was a stroke of statesmanship on the part of Charles. The Norsemen settled in France and their settlement came to be known as Normandy. Fresh inroads by Norsemen were repulsed by Rolf and his followers.

Invasions of the Norsemen

Founding of Normandy

In 923 a conspiracy led to the fall and imprisonment of Charles the Simple and election of Rudolf of Burgundy, son of Robert of France to the throne. A quarrel between Rudolf and some of the nobles led to a temporary restoration of Charles the Simple. But he was again dethroned and imprisoned where he died of starvation (929). Restored Rudolf also

Rudolf elected to the French throne

Louis IV died in 936 without children and Louis IV (936–54) was made king.
(936–54)

Lothar Louis IV was succeeded by his son Lothar (954–86) at the age of eight. Support of the recalcitrant vassals was bought for the sake of peace. One such vassal was Hugo. He was bought with the duchies of Aquitaine and Burgundy. But before he could occupy Aquitaine he died all of a sudden.

Hugh Capet and Otto He, however, left two capable sons Hugh Capet and Otto to continue his policy of expansion and of gaining possessions in the south of Gaul.

Lothar's quarrel with the clergy and the Germans taken advantage of by Hugh Capet Lothar, although capable, was not at all circum-spect. He quarrelled with the clergy and fought with the Germans for gaining possession of Lotharingia which belonged to Germany. Hugh Capet took advantage of this quarrel and obtained Otto III's friendship. It was at this juncture of French kingship Lothar died and his son Louis V succeeded him (986). He also followed his father to the grave, next year. The only legitimate claimant to the throne was Charles Duke of lower Lotharingia. But he was powerless and had no support among the French nobles.

Hugh Capet Fortune favoured Hugh Capet. The nobles, the church as well as Otto III and his Germany stood by him. The Archbishop Adelferon of Rheims and the bishops of all France called the nobles together for electing a king. The choice fell upon Hugh Capet, son of Hugo (987–96). In this way the French crown came into the possession of the Capetian dynasty, so called because Hugh was in the habit of wearing a cape, and that became hereditary in this family.
(987–96)

Ability of the Capetian kings and favourable circumstances The long rule of the Capetian dynasty, from 987–1328 was due to certain specially favourable circumstances, as much due to the ability of its kings. They were lucky to have always male heir for succession and often having only one son to succeed,

thus eliminating the necessity of doling out crown property to younger sons. Further, they were all healthy and long-lived which helped to avoid regency and minors.

4/Hugh Capet (987-96) : The election of Hugh Capet to the throne of France was significant in the sense that it marked the beginning of an uninterrupted succession of Capetian kings for more than three hundred years. The office of the king of France had in 987 three distinct facets. He was the feudal lord of his own estate, he was the suzerain of the feudal lords, and the king of an ill-defined area called France. The title of king was more significant of a moral preponderance of the holder of it rather than of wealth and power. In fact, in France of the tenth century kings had not acquired that eminence in power or wealth.

Three distinct facets of the French kingship

After his election as king Hugh Capet was crowned by the archbishop of Rheims in an elaborate ceremony. He was anointed by oil, said to have been sent from heaven for anointing Clovis, the first king of the Franks. The significance of the highly impressive ceremony and the part taken in it by the church dignitaries was that the church and the state were allies, and this alliance subsisted till the outbreak of the French Revolution.

Crowned by the Archbishop of Rheims

In his coronation oath the king, besides his general obligation to preserve peace, maintain justice and help the oppressed, had to undertake the special obligation to defend the church.

His coronation oath

At Hugh Capet's accession in 987 the Capetian domain was a compact small area not more than the size of a modern French province, and smaller than the estate of many a French noble. But it had the strategic importance of occupying central position of the country. It lay on the future highway of great overland trade-route.

Strategic importance of Capetian domain

*Hugh Capet's
success as a
ruler*

As a ruler Hugh Capet was quite as successful as could be expected under the circumstances. He was recognised as suzerain by the great vassals. He maintained an independent attitude towards the emperor and the papacy, and remained all his life a loyal defender of the Gallican church. He, however, earned a huge income by appropriating the income of the bishoprics during vacancies. Under him there was a distinct growth of the feeling of nationality among the people of France. This helped to increase the separation between France and her neighbours and the French were being imbued with a feeling of distinctiveness which the differences of their language and customs with their non-French neighbours had already generated in them.

*Robert II:
His character
and ability*

Hugh Capet was succeeded by Robert II surnamed 'Pious'. He was a man of upright character and great military ability. He fought for extension of his dominion and added several cities and districts to France.

Henry I

Under Henry I, son of Robert II was brave but indiscrete. He engaged himself in a continuous war with his great vassals, specially with Count of Blois and William of Normandy, the future William the Conqueror of England but with no success.

*Philip I
(1060–
1108)*

Under Philip I (1060–1108), son of Henry I, the policy of war with great vassals was continued. But it was not within the power of Philip to prevent William of Normandy from conquering England on his own behalf. Philip resisted Gregory VII's interference in French church and refused to oblige the papacy by going on the first crusade. He treated with severity all those prelates who were supporters of Pope Gregory VII. To Philip must go the credit of initiating the policy of keeping the Gallican church independent of the papacy. But this brought on him the wrath of some of the chroniclers

who accused him of fantastic crimes. But his last years were characterised by lack of able administration due to the disease of obesity to which he was a victim. Feudal anarchy gradually reached abnormal proportions.

Philip I's son Louis VI (1108–37), however, brought a change in the situation. Feudal chaos and anarchy was controlled and the power of the king increased. A great stability was brought about in the customs and practices of the government and society. But his last years were spent in punishing rebellious barons, asserting royal rights and occupying territories. All this had the effect of enhancing royal prestige. Despite his failure to put down all the rebellious barons, Louis was one of the ablest Capetian rulers.

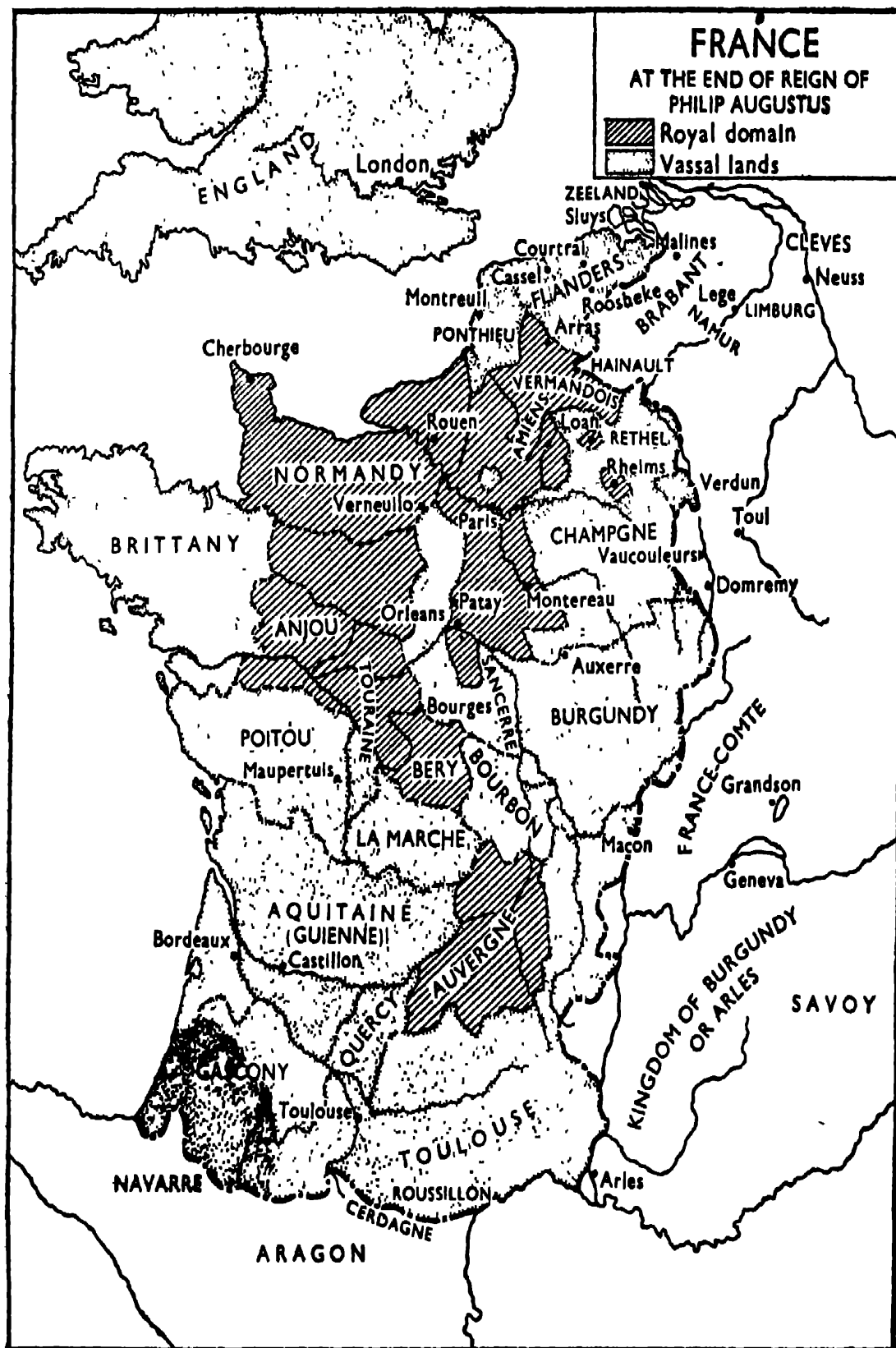
Louis VI
(1108–37)

Louis VI's son Louis VII (1137–80) was an incapable, but capricious, yet simple and over-religious man. He left his country and proceeded on the crusade and thereby undermined his powers in the country. He committed the fatal mistake of divorcing his wife Eleanor to whom belonged the whole of Aquitaine. It was during his reign that Henry II of England occupied a large portion of the French territory. His secret negotiations with Henry II's sons against their father could not prevent this.

Louis VII
(1137–80)

5/Philip Augustus (1180–1223): Philip Augustus succeeded his father at the age of fourteen. He was a politician of rare ability but was treacherous and unscrupulous. The first years of Philip's reign were taken up with the rivalry of the Houses of Flanders and Champagne each of which sought to be the masters and ministers of the young sovereign. Henry II of England gave his support to the Counts of Champagne and the partisans of Flanders were obliged to retire from Paris. They menaced war. But Philip with the help of Henry II of England

*Rivalry of the
Houses of
Flanders and
Champagne*



had easily overcome the malcontents. Henry II instead of trying to profit by the divisions of the French showed enough generosity by supporting the young king. But Philip ill-repaid this kindness by following his father's policy of seducing the sons of the English monarch from their allegiance and succeeded in securing possession of Normandy, Maine, Anjou and other provinces. For some years he waged war on his vassals and wrested many concessions from them. The battle of Bouvines was quite as advantageous to him as to Frederick II of Germany for whom it was fought. Philip took no personal part in the persecution of the Albigenses, but the crown reaped the benefit of it by acquiring their territory.

Philip secured possession of Normandy, Maine, Anjou and other provinces

Anglo-French rivalry was forgotten for some time under pressure of public opinion that demanded a joint crusading expedition by Richard of England and Philip Augustus for the recovery of Jerusalem from Saladin. But Richard and Philip Augustus could not for long forget their rivalry at home. Philip Augustus as soon as he heard of the death of the Count of Flanders whose daughter he had married, returned to France from the Holy Land and despite his promises to Richard that he would protect the English possessions in France, Philip Augustus entered into a secret deal with John against Richard and gained certain strongholds in Anjou and Touraine. He also attacked Normandy. Richard's captivity on his return journey from the Holy Land was rejoiced over by both Philip and his ally John of England. Philip even was working at a plan to place his son on the English throne, for which purpose he got his son married to Ingeborg, princess of Denmark in the hope of getting the assistance of the Danish fleet for the conquest of England. On the release of Richard from captivity Philip wrote in a letter to John 'The Devil is loose', and at once made arrangements for the protection of his newly

Idea of a joint crusade: Anglo-French rivalry forgotten for the time being

Philip's alliance with John of England against Richard

*Five years'
truce through
Pope's medi-
ation*

acquired possession at the cost of England. Richard breathing vengeance and slaughter, attacked Philip near Freteval and the latter escaped narrowly leaving everything behind. The war proceeded in Richard's favour and it was at the mediation of the Pope that a five-year-truce was signed between the contestant parties during which period Richard died and Philip Augustus was delivered from the only foe who could stand effectively against him after the death of Henry II.

*Philip
recognised
John's right
on Brittany
and Anjou*

Under John, the former ally of Philip, the relations between England and France did not improve. On the contrary John's nephew young Arthur turned to Philip for help and did him homage for Anjou, Poitou, Touraine, Maine and Brittany. He was also betrothed to the daughter of Philip. But Philip's serious difficulties with Pope Innocent III, compelled him to recognise John's right as lord of Brittany and Anjou, but in return he obtained a part of Norman Vexin and of Berry. John was, however, to do homage to the French king for his continental fiefs and pay a huge amount to him as feudal relief. All this was but the thin end of the wedge with which Philip prepared to altogether ruin the Angevin empire in the continent.

*Philip over-
lord of John*

*John sum-
moned by
Philip:
John's
refusal*

John married the betrothed daughter of the house of Angouleme. This was regarded as a great affront by Huge Lusignam who complained to the king of France as his overlord. Philip Augustus, overlord of both John and Hugh Lusignam, summoned John to answer the charge personally at his court. John's refusal to obey Philip Augustus, his overlord and for this contumacious conduct Philip forfeited all the fiefs John held under him in France. The motive behind this decision was to conquer the Angevin empire in alliance with Arthur of Brittany. But he received all the Angevin territories in the continent most unexpectedly. John had done to death his nephew Arthur which roused a

*John bought
Philip's
neutrality by
abandoning*

spate of revulsion against him. John under the circumstances bought off the neutrality of Philip Augustus by abandoning Brittany, Anjou, Maine, Touraine and Normandy to Philip. Poitou and Aquitaine remained to the English. Poitou was, however, conquered by Philip's son Louis VIII. Loss of the continental possessions was confirmed later (in 1259) by the Peace of Paris. The Capetian kingdom was doubled.

*Brittany,
Anjou,
Touraine,
Maine and
Normandy to
Philip*

The Welf-Waibling or rather the Welf-Hohenstaufen conflict had drawn into it the Angevins and the Capetians as well. The Angevins were against the Hohenstaufens who again had the good fortune of gaining the friendship of the Capetians. In 1212, Philip Augustus renewed this alliance and the crown prince Louis met emperor Frederick II at Vancouleurs to meet him with due respect. The final outcome of these two sets of alliances was the battle of Bouvines in which the Anglo-Welf, *i.e.* Angevin-Welf combination was thoroughly routed by Philip the leader of the Hohenstaufen-Capetian alliance in France. This was a splendid affirmation of the invigorated French monarchy. "That Philip Augustus, ten years after his defeat of John, should now overwhelm an international coalition not only assured the supremacy of the Capetians in France, it marked the beginning of French predominance in Europe over England and the Holy Roman Empire."

*Angevin-Welf
combinations
against Philip*

Philip Augustus strengthened the Capetian monarchy to a degree that his predecessors could not achieve. Philip's acquisition of vast territories, almost doubling the Capetian dominion, added to the power and prestige of the crown. Expansion of the Capetian dominion also immensely added to the resources of the monarchy, while it also led to a gradual elaboration of the framework of the government. The early development of the French constitution was on feudal lines and the monarchy

*Doubling the
Capetian
dominion;
added to the
prestige of the
French
monarchy*

<i>Philip obtained support of the church</i>	was no more than overlordship over vassals whose rights and powers limited those of the monarch in an inverse ratio. But as time went on, and by the end of the reign of Philip Augustus more and more emphasis was put on the powers of the king as king rather than on his prerogatives as feudal overlord and king was regaining the position held by Charles the Great. Philip Augustus enhanced the power of the monarchy by relying on the support of the church and lesser nobility against the greater nobles. He also received great support from the rich bourgeoisie of the towns.
<i>Feudal system manipulated to the advantage of monarchy</i>	The uninterrupted growth of the monarchical powers and institutions that began under Philip Augustus had completely wrecked the feudal foundations of France by the end of the reign of Louis IX, his grandson. The way in which Philip Augustus manipulated the feudal system in France to the advantage of the monarchy by perfectly legal means bears comparison with the anti-feudal measures of William the Conqueror of England. Philip obtained detailed information about the feudal rights of the king. He held one hundred and thirty-two inquests and preserved the documents in the royal archives. He was the first king to provide for such systematic preservation of documents. In these documents details of the feudal obligations of the nobles and lords as well as of the crown properties, number of towns, castles, etc., were incorporated. Further, under Philip, the French monarchy was freed from vassalage of every kind.
<i>French monarchy freed from vassalage of every kind</i>	
<i>Philip's administration</i>	Another important expedient of Philip Augustus to break down feudal independence and anarchy was the development of a central government as well as local administration, both controlled by the king's prerogatives. Chief local official was <i>Prevot</i> .
<i>Prevots, Baillis and Seneschals</i>	The system of the <i>Prevots</i> reminds one of the <i>missi dominici</i> of Charles the Great. Philip instituted two more classes of officials called <i>baillis</i> and <i>seneschals</i> .

The former were entrusted with duties of the English itinerant justice and sheriff. They collected revenue from royal domain, acted as king's local judges and saw to the enforcement of his rights as feudal suzerain. Baillis were appointed by the king on payment of salaries and held office during king's pleasure. For the larger districts of southern France, which were acquired under Philip *baillis* were appointed under a new name *seneschals*. Above the *baillis* and the *seneschals* were placed the investigators or inquisitors.

Despite its limitations the military service due from the vassals furnished the French king with adequate army. By issuing decrees similar to the English *Assize of Arms*, Philip Augustus sought to have made it the duty of every freeman to render military duty.

*Every free-
man com-
pelled to
render mili-
tary duty by
a decree*

In the growth of royal power the rise of towns was of fundamental importance. Towns free from feudal encumbrances while adhered to the principle of liberty, offered support to the king in dealing with the feudal vassals. Money and military support flowed from the towns which were granted sufficient measures of liberty by royal charters.

*Growth of
towns helped
growth of
royal power*

Under Philip Augustus, Paris was fast becoming glory of France and of Europe. The important departments of the administration were concentrated there. By improving the urban amenities and allowing autonomy to the University of Paris, Philip Augustus made Paris a centre of culture and politics. He began the construction of the palace of Louvre. It was from the bourgeoisie of Paris that Philip Augustus drew six persons into the government before he left on crusade.

*Paris—glory
of France: a
centre of
learning and
culture:
University of
Paris*

The reign of Philip Augustus constitutes a very important chapter in the history of France. He extended the royal domain enormously and provided for its good government, taking care to increase the

*Reign of
Philip—an
important
chapter in the*

French history royal power at the cost of the great feudal vassals. By numerous expedients Philip contributed to the cause of monarchy as well as France and the hereditary character of the crown seemed so well assured in his reign that he did not think it necessary to secure election of his son taking it for granted that the crown would automatically pass to his son. Philip was decidedly one of the greatest rulers of France.

Louis' extermination of the Albigenses heretics **6/Louis VIII(1223-26) :** Philip Augustus' successor Louis VIII succeeded in a year in which the Albigenses heresy raised its head again. Louis assumed the leadership and exterminated the heretics and acquired the lands of the house of Toulouse.

Sharing of territories and administration with his sons—a retrograde step He followed his father's policy in all respects except that he gave to each of his sons the income and administration of a part of his territories. This was a retrograde step, for at a time when everything possible should have been done to consolidate royal possessions he followed somewhat the Carolingian method of dividing the kingdom among his sons.

Most perfect Christian ruler **7/Louis IX (1226-70) :** Louis IX, surnamed the Saint, was a minor at the time of his accession. For the first ten years his mother, Blanche of Castile was the regent. She was a capable lady, as imperious as she was autocratic. Her strong rule had the effect of antagonising most of the great vassals, yet she was able to add to the royal power. Under her strict and able training Louis IX became the most perfect Christian ruler of his day. "Few men have taken Christianity so seriously and followed its dictates, even against their own interests, so closely as he." His fervent piety, however, led him to become a cruel persecutor, but this also led him to practise and spread Christian conduct among his court and subjects. He was a builder of abbeys and an encourager of sermons. Sainte Chapelle built by him was the most beautiful representation

His character

of Gothic architecture. His charity to the poor and the sick, his mercy as a judge, equality of his justice to all, were the most fundamental parts of his religious duties. He would try cases himself and wherever necessary alter sentences. Ancient customs of vengeance, private war and judicial duel were not approved by him. He forbade judicial duel as a means of justice. He prohibited private war, carrying of arms, etc. To curb misdeeds and corruptions of his officials he instituted the system of sending out officials to receive evidences of abuses.

A faithful account of Louis comes from the pen of no less a person than John, Lord of Joinville who was Louis' close friend and counsellor. Not that John approved of all the pious practices of Louis but as a biographer he was very honest. According to Joinville, Louis "was a pious knight, valiant crusader, firm, upright, decent monarch who wants peace, although not at any price." St. Louis was a pious son of the church no doubt but he stood up to his bishops and for most of his reign defended his own temporal control over the church, against the French prelates as well as the Pope. He joined the crusade and on his return became more and more concerned with his own salvation and that of his people and more ascetic in habit. In his dress and habits he became more like a monk than king. In eating and drinking he was temperate. His religious conscience was absolute master of him. Yet in his religious ideas he belonged to his own time. Side by side with his piety there was a zeal for orthodox Christianity in him which led him to recommend that the only method for settling a dispute with a Jew was to pierce his stomach with sword. The traditional reverent policy of kingship to the church was not modified by Louis IX, except insofar as it concerned the abuses and corruptions in the church. He was particularly scrupulous in his appointments to benefices. He aimed at stopping

*John's
account of
Louis IX*

*His sectarian
piety*

*His attitude
to the church*

the abuses of powers by the pope and the prelates and safeguard the rights of monarchy. For his piety and attitude to the church he was made a *Saint*.

His difficulties

During Louis IX's minority the government was run by his mother Blanche who was disliked by the feudal barons who declared against the regent and called her a *she-wolf*. The feudal reaction was headed by Philip Hurepel, the king's uncle, count of Boulogne. Theobold IV of Champagne, Raymon VII of Toulouse and Henry III of England. But the struggle against the regent was confused and useless. Blanche was immensely popular with the townsmen and the people of Paris came armed to the help of the young king. Even on his attainment of majority Louis IX had to quell more formidable outbreaks caused by the fierce persecution in Languedoc by his *Seneschals*. In fulfilment of his father's will Louis IX conferred on his brother Robert, the county of Artois, on Charles Anjou and Maine, and on Alphonso Poitou and Auvergne. The turbulent Poitovins revolted and called in their former suzerain king Henry III of England whose attempt at armed intervention failed with his abject defeat near Saintes.

No motive of expansion

St. Louis refused to extend his boundaries at the expense of his neighbours although many opportunities for doing so offered themselves. He even restored to England certain territories which he thought were unjustly seized. Louis' effort at a reasonable settlement with England bore fruit at last and Henry III agreed to recognise Louis as his overlord for Gascony and Aquitaine but to renounce claim on Normandy, Maine, Anjou and Poitou in 1259. His distress was unbounded at the conflict between the emperor and the pope. He remained strictly neutral in the conflict and sought to use his good offices for a settlement between them. His piety and reputation for honesty and justice made him the arbiter of Europe, and the church

recognised the loftiness of his character by declaring him a saint. In the struggle between Henry III and Simon de Montfort Louis IX was called upon to arbitrate. But the *Mise of Amiens* (1264) based on his conviction of the inalienable rights of the kings was indeed a failure. All the same he was never a self-seeking mediator, but a sincere promoter of peace among the Christians. But towards the infidels he was persecuting and he was ruthless in suppression of heresy. In external affairs his chief aim was crusade to the Holy Land.

*Arbiter of
Europe :
Promoter of
peace :
Ruthless to
infidels and
heretics*

The reign of St. Louis (Louis IX) was important for various reasons. Up to this time about eighty of his subjects enjoyed the right to coin money which was legal tender in their respective estates. Louis made royal money legal tender all over the country. Counterfeiting was strictly prohibited. He reformed the office of the *bailli* making acceptance of any kind of gratification illegal and punishable. Every *bailli* was made to hold court regularly and to report back to the king about his activities.

*His currency
reforms*

Louis IX's counsellors were mostly men from old domain. Churchmen like Eudes Rigaud, Archbishop of Rouen, Gui Foulquoi, and Robert de Sorbonne, the founder of the Sorbonne College in Paris University, played the leading part in Louis' government. There were also petty nobles who assisted in the administration.

*His
counsellors*

Around the person of the king there was a large number of people of different ranks, who constituted his court. The highest of these ranks formed his council which was divided into three parts with specific duties for each. For, Louis IX's policy was conservative, to maintain existing rights and exact acknowledged duties. The Curia under him was steadily growing more organised and specialised, and grew into clear divisions. These divisions were *Council Proper*, *Officers of the Treasury* and the *Parlement*

*His admini-
stration*

*Revival of
the study
of Roman
Law: Added
importance of
the king*

de Paris. The council had executive functions, the treasury officials were in charge of collection and disbursement and of receiving accounts from the *baillis*, and the *Parlement* became the highest judicial body in the realm. The establishment of the *Parlement de Paris* simplified the judicial system by making justice quick. The jurisdiction of the *Parlement* was also extended. His local officials—the *baillis* in the north and the *Seneschals* in the south had unlimited powers, far from the king's eye. Revival of the study of Roman law under Louis brought out the imperial principle that the king is the source of all justice. From this followed another important principle that in case anybody was not satisfied with the justice obtained at lower courts could appeal to the king. Trial by duel was forbidden by Louis.

*Issuing of
ordinances
without the
consent of the
vassals*

Louis IX was the first king of France, who issued ordinances for the whole realm without the consent of the vassals. Such assumption of legislative power was consummation of the departure from the practice of feudal legislation with the consent of the vassals. For the 'general good' Louis later started legislating in his own name. Louis' ordinances against private warfare as well as carrying of arms roused great resentment.

*Peace guiding
principle of
foreign policy*

The guiding principle of the foreign policy of Louis was peace. He was a pacifist in the truest sense of the term. It was out of his regard for peace that he settled dispute with England by the Peace of Paris, 1259, by which he was content with liege homage for England's retention of Guienne and Gascony.

*Monarchy
under him
became
national*

St. Louis succeeded in making the monarchy so popular among the non-feudal population of France and made it national in place of feudal. "In his person the cult of monarchy by divine right awoke an early response. All France united in mourning his death in 1270."

Despite its darker features like religious persecution of non-Christians, etc., the pacific age of Louis IX was certainly gratifying. "Population was still increasing, waste and forest being reclaimed for cultivation. If the nobles were already becoming impoverished and dependent on the crown, the peasants were prospering and personal freedom decreasing. The townsmen were more solvent than the town finances. Travel was more secure. It was the time of perfection in Gothic architecture. Vernacular literature also flourished, in verse perhaps more tedious and allegoric than of old, save in the genre of shrewd, contemporary satire, but in narrative prose a living picture of the day. The monarchy in St. Louis' hands was a contributor to the renown and greatness of France."

Estimate

8/Philip III (1270-85): At the death of St. Louis, Philip III ascended the throne. One special feature of his reign was the collection of favourites of the crown in the court. These favourites were generally from the common people, capable and ambitious and well trained in Roman Law. Philip III was drawn into war with Spain by which he acquired Navarre. He also extended the French territories towards the south. Rebellious vassals were dealt with severely by him. He subjected to taxation persons who disguised themselves as clericals although they were engaged in business and other worldly affairs.

*Collection of
favourites in
the court*

*Levy of tax
on clericals*

9/Philip IV (1285-1314): Under Philip IV, called the Handsome, France became the leading power in Europe. It is doubtful if he himself had formulated his policy. "He must be judged by the group of clever and unscrupulous lawyers from the south of France, trained in Roman law, who were his intimate advisers." Philip IV's policy was the policy of these men. Historians have doubted whether Philip IV dominated these devoted servants of

*France
leading
power in
Europe*

absolutism or they him. Philip wanted to imitate Justinian.

*Regular
payment of
feudal dues*

Need for additional revenue for the expanding state drove Philip to make the payment of the feudal dues so regular that it was difficult to differentiate these dues from direct tax. Exemption from military service could be obtained on payment which was made commensurate with the amount of the wealth possessed by the person seeking exemption. Every commercial transaction was taxed, till at last every essential of life—wheat, salt, wine, etc., was subjected to taxation.

*Jews driven
out of the
country, their
property
confiscated*

In his anxiety to collect more funds Philip IV drove the Jews out of his country and confiscated their property. The Italian Bankers were also compelled to leave France and their assets were confiscated. Philip began to draw more and more upon the newly created wealth of the commercial and industrial classes of France.

*His control
of the popes*

The commanding position of Philip IV in Europe could be seen in the removal of papacy to Avignon and the control which he exercised over the popes. Pope Clement V was obliged to deliver the Order of the Templars into the king's hands and the latter despoiled the Order of the Templars of its vast wealth by trumping up fictitious charges.

*Great Council
and Small
Council*

Under Philip IV certain new offices were introduced into the government. The tendency towards bureaucratic absolutism and specialisation of administrative functions begun under his predecessor grew under Philip IV. Under him the old difference between the king's court (*curia regis*) and the king's council took new shape and crystallised into two councils one *Great Council* and the other the *Small* or the *Secret Council*. The former was summoned on occasions while the latter composed of king's special advisers and household officials, was always ready at hand for consultation. This difference, and more

particularly the inclusion of king's household officials in the small council may be regarded as the beginning of the difference of the character of the king as king as such, as well as a private person.

The same specialisation could be seen in the *Parlement de Paris* although it had not become entirely a professional body under Philip IV. The ecclesiastics were excluded from it and it became a professional body only under Philip V. The *Parlement* was divided into chambers—chamber of the pleas, chamber of petitions, chamber of inquests, etc. The local administration did not mark any change except that it was geared to grab money for the king.

*Divisions of
the Parlement
de Paris*

One great constitutional innovation under Philip IV was the summoning of the States-General first in 1302 in which all sections of the people were represented. Theoretically, it was no new thing, for the king as the feudal overlord had the right of counsel from the vassals. Yet Philip's summoning of the States-General, in the way he did, for consultation to determine the measures to be taken in his conflict with Pope Boniface VIII gave it the look of a national assembly 'corresponding to the English Parliament that France achieved before the French Revolution'. Further, the innovation was all the more significant, for, Philip summoned it not once but thrice during his reign. Again, in it Philip not only summoned his greater vassals but also his indirect or rear vassals. His bitter conflict with the pope made him anxious to enlist the support as many people as possible and as such he made the States-General to represent the whole nation. This was why he also summoned the bourgeoisie representatives of the towns.

*Conflict with
Pope Boni-
face VIII:
Summoning
of States-
General*

The tremendous development of the French monarchy under Philip IV led to a feudal reaction. The nobles of Burgundy, Champagne, Vermandois and of other localities demanded restoration of their

*Feudal
reaction at
the develop-
ment of the*

*French
monarchy*

*Louis X
(1314–16)*

feudal privileges of the days of St. Louis. But it was not for Philip IV but his successor Louis X to meet the feudal demands by issue of charters. The charters of liberties issued by Louis X (1314–16) were, however, not of the nature of Magna Carta but these were individual charters—warrants of provincial liberties granted to the feudal lords, which were not much repeated by the kings.

*Philip V,
(1316–17),
Charles IV
(1317–28)*

Louis X died in 1316, for the first time in three hundred years of Capetian rule, without leaving a son. The crown went to his brother Philip of Poitiers, called Philip V who died in 1317 when again the crown passed on to his brother Charles IV. Charles died leaving no son and with his death the Capetian dynasty ended and the French crown passed on to the Valois dynasty (1328).

10/Services of the early Capetians to France:

*Hugh the
Great—the
first states-
man of
the Robertian
house*

History repeats itself; in the last years of the ninth century the supplanting of the Carolingians by the Capetians in France was but the re-enactment of the drama of gradual overthrow of the Merovingians by the Carolingian Mayors of the Palace. Charles the Simple was the last of the Carolingians to exercise any real authority in France. The new dynasty, commonly known as the Capetian dynasty after Hugh Capet, was founded by Robert the Strong. His two sons who grasped the sceptre in turn were Odo and Robert. But Robert and his two sons were warriors with no clear-cut policy of state-administration and with no knowledge of statecraft were more dukes than kings. Hugh the Great, son of Robert who succeeded his father Robert in 923 was the first statesman of the Robertian house. He was a shrewd tactician and a statesman. He understood the danger of too openly assuming royal powers and dignities, as these would excite the jealousy of other dukes of France. So he kept on the throne of France a puppet of the West-Frankish house, son of Charles

the Simple and himself ruled over France as 'Duke of the French'. Charles the Simple's son Louis IV was however not content to play the part of a *rois faineant*; he married the sister of Otto the Great and found a patron in him. But soon after Otto withdrew beyond the Rhine and Louis IV was deprived of his help. Hugh the Great realised his chance and drove out Louis from Leon, the only town where he could shut himself with his wife and children. Louis in distress sought Otto's help and also lay his case before a council of bishops at Ingelheim. Hugh felt the need of compromise. He restored Leon to Louis and ever since this reconciliation the relation between Louis and Hugh the Great was cordial. In 954 when Louis IV suddenly died, Hugh had the goodness to set Louis' minor son Lothar to the throne. Hugh himself died in 956. The Robertian house stood on firm legs during the lifetime of Hugh and even after his death his policy of strengthening his house went on with greater force.

His achievements

On the death of Hugh the Great, his son Hugh who took the surname of Capet succeeded to the family possessions and the title of the 'Duke of the French'. The initial years of Hugh Capet's career was too liberal and too non-interfering because being too young in age he could not play the dictator. This left Lothar rather free. Further, the defeat of the Magyars at the hands of Otto I made France free from Magyar raids. 'Brought up in his father's school, he was clear-headed, cunning, resourceful and cold-blooded.' He made his power more secure by placing one of his brothers in Burgundy and extending his influence over Poitou by marrying Adelaide the only heiress. Lothar as he grew into manhood wanted to play his father's part but Hugh overmatched him both in resources and policy. Lothar was also unimaginative and unstatesman-like in his policy towards Germany. While his father realised the need of the help of

Hugh Capet

His exploits

Otto I, Lothar followed an altogether different policy. He reversed his father's policy of dependence on the German Emperor. On the contrary he began to encourage plots that were being fomented against Otto II's (son of Otto I) authority in Lorraine. Lothar's idea was to recover the Carolingian inheritance earlier usurped by the German kings. He entirely missed the objective and he lost the German friendship. Otto II forthwith entered into an alliance with Hugh Capet. Otto invaded France and thoroughly punished Lothar. But for the untimely death of Otto II situation would have been disastrous for Lothar almost immediately. Again Lothar's ruinous policy of quarrel with Adalbero, the famous archbishop of Reims led to a coalition between the Cathedral of Reims, Otto II's son Otto III and Hugh Capet. Needless to stress that the position of Hugh Capet became unassailable. Lothar was bereft of support and resources, and vainly, though gallantly, struggled on till his death in 986. Lothar's son Louis V was no more successful than his father. He also quarrelled with archbishop Adalbero and alienated the church support. He, however, wanted to win over Hugh Capet to his side but his death in 987 after one year of his accession left things smooth for Hugh Capet.

Revolution in the history of France

With the support of Adalbero and Gerbert and with no direct heir of the Carolingian line to contest his claim with any great vehemence Hugh was coronated king of the French, at Noyon. The Duke of the Normans and the Count of Anjou lent him support the Emperor Otto III recognised his position on condition that he would not lay any claim on Lotharingia. Thus was accomplished a revolution in the history of France (987) and there was hardly any flutter in any quarter. 'The accession of Hugh Capet has often been described as the victory of the feudal principle over the monarchical, of the idea a suzerainty over the idea of sovereignty;

and in the words of Montesquieu,—the title of king was united to the greatest fief.' But this is a mistaken view. For, accession of Hugh involved no striking change in form. The Capetian kings had the same universal recognition and the same attributes of sovereignty as their predecessors. The Capetian kings could reasonably claim themselves as the lawful successors of the Carolingians, for Hugh was elected to the throne when the Carolingian dynasty became extinct. The Teutonic practice was to elect the king, and, although this practice was becoming a forgotten one as hereditary succession was prevalent, yet an elected king had as good a title as the king by hereditary right. Further, the Capetians had the same conceptions of sovereignty, and followed the same principle of government.

*No change
in form of
monarchy*

But in spite of the fact that the Capetian rule was more or less a continuation of that of the Carolingians, the accession of Hugh Capet may as well be regarded as the starting point of all later French history. It must, however, be noted, as Prof. Tout points out, that the accession of Hugh Capet is not to be looked upon as a triumph of one race over another, that is, of the Celts over the Teutons. For not only that there was no national feeling in the tenth century to regard the triumph as a national triumph, but also that there is no evidence to show that the later Carolingians were different from the Robertian house in tongue, ideas or policy. But if it was no triumph of nationalism, for to be sure, there was no such idea at that time, it was at least the beginning of it. And from this point of view the accession of Hugh Capet is quite significant.

*Accession of
Hugh Capet
—starting
point of later
French history*

First, his accession completed the process which the Treaty of Verdun had begun. By the partition Treaty of Verdun, 843, Charles' empire was divided between his successors, the chief result of which was the separation of the German nationalities from the Gaulish. This division of the empire on nationality.

*Completion
of the process
begun by the
Treaty of
Verdun*

basis marked the beginning of the national existence of Germany as well as of France although the Teutonic rulers held the sovereignty over the Gaulish part as well. In the accession of Hugh Capet the consequences foreshadowed by the Treaty of Verdun took a real shape and there was a national king for the French nation from now on. But the situation developed unconsciously, for, there was hardly any sense of nationality in the tenth century, and accidentally for the extinction of the later Carolingian ruling house in France.

*French
monarchy
became
national*

Secondly, Hugh Capet's power, and for the matter of that of his successors as well, was local and in due course it became national. This was bound to be the case. For whereas the Carolingians had the traditions of imperial monarchy, the Capetians had none. The Carolingians had temptations to look back and attempt at universal domination, the Capetians had no such past traditions to look back upon. Thus whereas there could have been no idea of any national monarchy under kings who were looking back to imperial traditions of universal dominion, the Capetians whose power was limited and localised from the very beginning were bound to tend towards a national monarchy. Hugh Capet, therefore, had no claim to rule beyond the limits ascribed to the West Frankish kingdom by the Treaty of Verdun.

*Hugh Capet's
ambition
limited to
France*

Hugh Capet spoke the infant French tongue, his ambitions were limited to French soil, he represented the new nationality that soon began to take a foremost place amidst the nations of all Europe.

*A French
prototype of
English king
Harold*

Thirdly, Hugh Capet personally was an embodiment of the new national character and energy. He was a French prototype of the English king Harold. But he was less fortunate than Harold, for in France then, national ideal was out of the question, for she was a fully feudalised country.

To gain the position of a national king was difficult, for the authority of such a king must be based on feudal support. But Hugh, however, had certain advantages in this regard. He inherited all the Carolingian power, further, he could claim to have been the great fief holder. Thus his monarchical character was supplemented by his feudal authority. Thus Hugh could save monarchy in a feudalised country with the support of his fief. The French feudatories helped and obeyed Hugh Capet, thinking that Hugh, though king, was after all, one of themselves. Thus in all probability the rule of the early Capetians was weak, although it is plain that under the first four Capetians France had begun a new existence. The history of modern Europe is the history of the rise and development of nationalities. This movement towards the rise and development of nationalities may be said to have begun in France with the accession of the Capetians a long line of national kings to the throne of France. It is with these limitations that the election of Hugh Capet may be regarded as a triumph of nationality.

Fourthly, the accession of Hugh Capet was more positively a triumph of the church. The support of Adelbero and Gerbert really had given Hugh the throne. In the feudal monarchy the church upheld in monarchy the Roman tradition of orderly rule and taught that the king ruled by God's grace. Although in the tenth century such an ideal of political supremacy of king over the feudal nobles was more or less beyond people's vision yet it was through such a beginning that the later real pre-eminence of the king was to issue.

*A triumph
of the church*

Fifthly, it is customary to regard the early Capetians as feeble kings. But it is so only in contrast with the later great powers of the French kings. The Capetians were not so feeble as they are sometimes thought to be. Hugh Capet was the ruler whose authority extended over whole of France. He

*Hugh Capet's
authority
extended all
over France*

inherited the traditions of the Carolingians and the Merovingians. Again, the feudal dominions were cut up by great ecclesiastical territories and these were places where the king had a greater authority.

*Philip
Augustus
king of great
importance*

*Capetian rule
gave French
monarchy
continuity
and strength*

The early Capetians were not men of extraordinary wisdom or strength, but they had the clear-headedness of understanding where to begin and how to proceed. It was not until the accession of Philip Augustus that the Capetian kings were of any consequence. Yet they followed a policy of caution which contributed in an unbroken measure to the strength and permanence of the French monarchy. Compared to the dukes of Normandy, Burgundy, Aquitaine, etc., the early Capetians were rather insignificant. But the early Capetians did nothing to force the dukes to combine against them. By gradual and steady measures they added to their dominions, kept their house clean and made themselves respected at home before they could demand respect abroad. They kept themselves scrupulously aloof from the contemporary movements, intellectual or religious and were laying the foundations of monarchy at home with all care. The fact that the first six Capetians reigned for a total period of one hundred and ninety-three years, gave the French monarchy continuity and strength, not in the least dissipated by any succession struggle. The Capetians were also fortunate in having almost invariably a grown-up male child to succeed. All these rendered the French monarchy sufficiently strong in its foundations. Contributions of the early Capetians to French and French monarchy were both conscious as well as fortuitous.

Twelfth Century Renaissance

CUSTOMARILY THE TERM *Renaissance* is associated with the revival of art and learning that had taken place in Italy in the fourteenth century and spread across the Alps and ran out its course in the sixteenth. Yet it will be a mistake to suppose that the *Italian Renaissance* was an isolated process of rebirth. In fact, there had been a succession of renaissances. The Carolingian Renaissance of the ninth century and the Ottonian of the tenth were followed by another in the twelfth.

*Italian
Renaissance
related to
Carolingian
and twelfth
century
Renaissance*

Twelfth Century Renaissance : The intellectual revival towards the end of the twelfth century which is usually called the Twelfth Century Renaissance was a bridge that linked the Carolingian Renaissance of the ninth century with the Italian Renaissance of the sixteenth. It must, however, be pointed out that there was not much to divide twelfth from the eleventh century with regard to the renaissance. Many of the topics and controversies and currents of thought spanned over both the centuries. Anselm, the first great thinker of the eleventh century lived into the first decade of the twelfth. The name twelfth century renaissance is therefore arbitrary. This revival comprised an inquisitive study of the literature of the seven liberal arts, production of manuals on all the different branches of knowledge and the foundation of universities. It also included the preparation for the co-ordination and synthesis of theology, metaphysics, natural science and scholasticism of Thomas Aquinas. It was also characterised by much forethought and rediscovery of Aristotelian logic.

*Not much to
divide eleventh
and twelfth
centuries*

*A bridge
between
Carolingian
and Italian
Renaissance*

*Thomas
Aquinas*

<i>Acquaintance with the new world of intellect and knowledge</i>	In the eleventh and twelfth centuries, western Europe became acquainted with a new world of intellect and knowledge whose origin was Greek and Mohammedan. Norman conquest of southern Italy and Sicily facilitated the amalgamation of Greek, Latin, Saracen and Christian cultures. The Christian advance against Saracen Spain brought the Christian culture in close touch with Arabic science and philosophy, literature and music.
<i>Intellectual and religious quickening helped by Cluniac movement</i>	The intellectual as well as religious quickening marked by the Cluniac reform and the custom of pilgrimages that eventually led to the first crusade towards the end of the eleventh century widened the intellectual horizon of western Europe by shaking off the lethargy of the people. In the eleventh century, specially under the papacy of Gregory VII, the need of trained scholars and lawyers was very keenly felt. The investiture struggle needed the services of scholars and lawyers for defending both the Papacy and the Empire. In fact, the investiture struggle stimulated controversy and produced important and voluminous literature. Monte Cassino was an important centre for ecclesiastical studies, Salerno for medicine, Bologna for Roman law. The eleventh century was a great period of preparation for the twelfth century renaissance that followed.
<i>Need of scholars and lawyers</i>	
<i>Monte Cassino, Salerno and Bologna</i>	
<i>Boethius, Porphyry</i>	European scholarship that reached maturity in the twelfth century started maturing in the eleventh when scholars began to appeal to reason in preference to faith. Aristotelian logic made available to the west in Latin translation by Boethius and Porphyry, of treatises, <i>Categories</i> , <i>On Interpretation</i> , etc., was the substance of the West's knowledge of logic, till the middle of the twelfth century. By applying reason to popular belief in the doctrine of transubstantiation, Berengar of Tours challenged Boethius, Priscian and Donatus. In his challenge of the belief in transubstantiation Berengar anticipated Martin Luther, the founder of the Protestant church.
<i>Berengar</i>	

In the conflict between reason and authority, even religion was not spared.

In the twelfth century Renaissance the church and the clerks showed a special interest in various branches of knowledge, both for knowledge's sake and for throwing light on the interpretation of the scriptures. The result, naturally, was that the church was tremendously influenced by the twelfth century Renaissance. Apart from the intellectual revival and exuberance, the latter half of the twelfth century witnessed a change of the highest importance in trade, manufacture, craftsmanship, etc. Thus it was an overall revival and progress that made the twelfth century one of special importance in the history of medieval civilisation.

*The church
deeply
influenced by
the twelfth
century
renaissance*

The period that elapsed between the Carolingian Renaissance and that of the twelfth century saw a continuous and systematic pursuit of education in the monastery schools and cathedrals. The great monasteries of Monte Cassino, Fleury, Corbic, Reichenue, etc., were not permitted to maintain schools, but all the same some of the cathedral and many of the monastic schools down to the twelfth century did a considerable work in educating children of wealthy and noble parents. In the twelfth century, however, the cathedral schools were eclipsed by the monastic schools which through their teaching of grammar, theology, etc., by scholars called scholasticus did marvellous work for an all-round intellectual revival. In Italy, however, the monastic schools were gradually developed into universities. Gradually, trans-Alpine universities began to grow up and the university of Paris soon rose into prominence due to the teaching of Peter Abelard and the writings of Porphyry. Abelard's work was of great and varied importance to philosophy and theology. He intoxicated the scholars of his generation to find delight in logic. Abelard was unquestionably one of the greatest figures in the intellectual history

*Carolingian
and twelfth
century
Renaissance
linked up*

*Predominance
of monastic
schools*

*Growth of
universities*

of Europe. His contributions to the study of dialectic were of a fundamental nature.

*Bernard, Hugh
of St. Victor,
John of Salis-
bury, Peter
Lombard and
Gratian*

Other names that figured in the twelfth century Renaissance were Bernard, Hugh of St. Victor, John of Salisbury, Peter Lombard and Gratian. Gratian was responsible for a revival of jurisprudence. All these brought about the much-needed importance of thought which was characteristic of every renaissance.

*Oxford and
Cambridge
Universities*

England also had universities at Oxford and Cambridge early in the thirteenth century. If the university of Paris as well as those of Italy had given rise to freedom of thought it may be said that the different universities of Europe, each with a particular bias for a particular branch of studies, worked for the overall renaissance of the twelfth century. The legal renaissance was due to the university of Bologna. The Roman law had been studied and even applied to the church. The result of the legal renaissance of Bologna was the creation of an eagerness among the civilians and canonists for a close study of law which went a long way to the development, definition and arrangement of the customary as well as the canon laws.

*Application
of Logic to
Theology*

Finally, greater application of logic to theology and the study of canon law and their interpretation led to the development of a spirit of independence among the church which was also the characteristic feature of the Cluniac and the Hilderbrandine movements. The investiture contest was the outward expression of this spirit of independence. It was supposed that the lay investiture was nothing short of aggression upon God's religion and the church by secular authority. This spirit of independence continued till the Reformation movement in the sixteenth century when, in England at least, the church came under the control of the king.

*Emancipa-
tion of men's
thought*

Thus we may conclude that the twelfth century renaissance led to the emancipation of men's thought which showed itself in art, literature, law and religion.

CHAPTER 16

The Crusades

1/ Motives behind the Crusades : THE CRUSADES WERE great military expeditions carried on intermittently for two centuries for the recovery of Jerusalem from the *infidels*. Usually eight crusades are enumerated as worthy of mention, of which again the first four are regarded by historians as principal crusades and the other four as minor crusades. Besides these, there were children's crusades as well as other expeditions, such as the wars against the Moors in Spain, and the Albigensians.

*Military
expeditions
for recovery of
Jerusalem*

The forces behind such long sustained movements as the crusades, generated slowly and for long, in the minds of those who took part in them.

*Forces
behind the
crusades*

(i) The chief moving force of the crusades was the religious ideas and feelings of the times, particularly in respect of the holy places and the places of pilgrimage.

*Religious
ideas and
feelings*

(ii) The conquest of Jerusalem by the Seljuk Turks in 1076 had made pilgrimages to Jerusalem manifold difficult than what they had been when it was under the tolerant Arabs.

*Difficulties
in pilgrima-
ges to
Jerusalem*

(iii) Stories of desecration of churches, of subjecting the Patriarch of Jerusalem to indignities, of destruction of churches under the Turks, gave rise to widespread resentment among the European Christians, which gradually was transformed into a crusading zeal to release the holy sepulchre from the hands of the Turks. Swords were now taken to fight for the faith.

*Desecration
of the church
and indignity
to the
Patriarch*

(iv) The militant spirit in the church was again the result of the martial influence that came upon

*Martial
influence upon
the church*

the church when the barbarians were converted into Christianity.

*Medieval
method of
decision by
ordeal of
battle made
church
militant*

(v) Further, the medieval way of thinking, that is, deciding things by ordeal of battle also played its part in making the church militant in nature.

*Militant
nature of the
Islam made
the church all
the more
militant in
defence*

(vi) The natural reaction to the martial creed of the Islam also had forced the church to be militant in dealing with the Turks.

*Commercial
and political
motives*

(vii) The commercial as well as political motives of some of the Italian cities, as also the restless spirit of the Normans served as another cause of the crusades. In fact, many knights, princes and kings headed the crusades in the hope of securing fiefs in the east by wresting lands from the *infidels*.

*Growth of
feudal aristo-
cracy in
France*

(viii) The growth in France of a feudal aristocracy that tended to swarm into the surrounding regions with its restless spirit served as a potent cause for the crusades.

*Reformed
papacy
assumed
moral leader-
ship—the
crusades an
opportunity*

(ix) The emergence of a reformed papacy laid claims to the moral leadership of Europe and the holy war against the *infidels* offered it the opportunity to vindicate the claims.

*Division of
the Islamic
world*

A number of factors, as Professors Myers and Deanesly point out, favoured the crusading movements in the eleventh century,. In the first place, the division of the Islamic world politically into three rival portions under the Caliphs of Bagdad, Cairo and Cordova, and in two religious sects had made Islam weaker. In fact, as Deanesly points out, the Christian success throughout the crusades depended on the division of Islam.

*Growth of
sea-power of
the Italian
Republics*

In the second place, the growth of the sea-power of the republics of Venice, Pisa, Genoa, etc., had cleared the Mediterranean of the Moslem pirates and this freed the crusaders from the dread of the

sea-routes to Jerusalem and expeditions by sea-routes were undertaken.

In the third place, Europe had been trained to hate the Moslems as a result of the long struggle against them in Spain and the Mediterranean.

*Hatred of the
Europeans
towards the
Moslems*

In the fourth place, the Cluniac movement had fostered religious devotion which had much to do in generating the crusading zeal for the sake of the holy places.

*Cluniac
movement
fostered crusa-
ding zeal*

Added to the above may be mentioned: (i) the appeals from the eastern Emperors for help which were practically the immediate cause of the crusades. (ii) Further, the conversion of the Hungarians into Christianity had opened the land-route to the east and the early expeditions were led through this land-route. (iii) Lastly, the pre-eminent authority that the popes wielded in persuading people to join in the Holy Wars was another potent cause of the crusades. The first crusade was preached by Pope Urban II at the Council of Clermont in 1095.

*Immediate
causes*

(a) **First Crusade :** The eagerness for the recovery of Syria and Palestine was first roused by Urban II at the Council of Clermont. He appealed to the vanity of the Frenchmen by addressing them as a "race chosen and beloved by God" and called upon them to destroy the 'accursed and bastard race of Turks' who 'destroy the altars after having defiled them'. In a more realistic note Urban emphasised the great opportunity for worldly advancement that the crusade against the land of the *infidels* would open. "This land which you inhabit, shut in all sides by the sea and surrounded by mountain peaks, is too narrow for your large population, nor does it abound in wealth; and it furnishes scarcely food enough for its cultivators." This appeal made the crusade more than a simple holy war. Pope Urban also looked to the crusade as a means

*Pope Urban
at Council of
Clermont*

*Crusade more
than a simple
holy war*

*A phase of
political and
economic
expansion of
Western
Europe*

of alleviating Europe's dreadful curse, the madness of private war, by calling upon the knights to either lay down the girdle of such knighthood or advance boldly as knights of Christ, and rush as quickly as possible to the defence of the church. Yet it must be made particularly clear that the crusades, despite the great religious enthusiasm of the moment, were a phase of the political and economic expansion of western Europe, which was nothing but the medieval chapter of the history of imperialism. The hysteria of crusade worked up by Urban II was augmented by the impassioned preaching of men like Peter the Hermit among the peasants and artisans who also came to participate in crusade for which they were totally unfit.

*First crusade
led by great
nobles*

The first crusade was not joined by any king or prince. It was led by great nobles like Godfrey of Bouillon, Duke of Lorraine, Robert Duke of Normandy and Count Raymond of Toulouse. In 1097 the crusaders took Nicaea and in 1099 Jerusalem itself and established some government for it.

*Capture of
Nicaea and
Jerusalem*

The amount of blood that crusaders had shed of the *infidels* on that day is incredible. No one had heard or seen such slaughter of the pagan people ever before. Godfrey was made the prince and the protector of the holy sepulchre and on his death in 1100 Count Baldwin of Edessa was crowned the first king of the kingdom of Jerusalem. Under Baldwin I (1100-18) and Baldwin II (1118-31) Jerusalem was well protected against the attacks of the Saracens and the Turks. Not only that, Sidon, Tyre, Berytus and many other places were wrested from the Mohammedans. The Christian kingdom of Jerusalem was extending on all sides. There were crusaders' states: Tripoli, Edessa, Antioch and Jerusalem. The king of Jerusalem theoretically held the overlordship of the other three states. But the kingdom was becoming weak due to internal dissensions among the knights and barons, and the

*Sidon, Tyre,
Berytus and
many other
towns wrested
from the
Mohamme-
dans*



political history of the kingdom is as chaotic and miserable as that of early feudal states of the west.

The political organisation of the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem set up by the crusaders was just a reproduction of the feudal monarchy that they had been familiar with at home. The feudal customs of the kingdom of Jerusalem were formulated in the *Assizes of Jerusalem* in early thirteenth century and these assizes contain most complete body of feudal laws extant, and happen to be the chief source of information about the western European feudalism. Apart from feudalism, the crusaders' states of Syria and Jerusalem retained all the local political and judicial institutions unaltered. The government of the cities remained in the hands of the local officials. Latin church was established. There was one Patriarch each at Jerusalem and Antioch with eight archbishoprics, sixteen bishoprics and number of monasteries under them.

*Feudal
monarchy set
up at Jeru-
salem*

*Assizes of
Jerusalem*

*Patriarchates
and Arch-
bishoprics*

The defence of the kingdom of Jerusalem posed a great problem. The kings of Jerusalem could not depend merely on the feudal service, for, there were only seven hundred knights and five thousand foot-soldiers. The kings, therefore, supplemented the feudal army by maintaining a small standing army and enrolled native archers, engineers, cavalry as mercenaries. The chief defence of the kingdom was, however, the magnificent castles built at huge cost and with the engineering skill of the Byzantines and the Saracens. The kingdom of Jerusalem found its most reliable soldiers in that strange combination of chivalry and monasticism which led to the formation of the military orders of the Templars and Hospitalers. The knight Templars as an unilitary order owed its origin to Hugh of Payens. King of Jerusalem gave Hugh and his followers quarters near the Temple of Solomon and their duty was to act as guides and protectors of the pilgrims on their way to the Holy Land. St. John of Jerusalem founded

*Defence of
Jerusalem a
problem*

*Orders of
Hospitalers
and Knight
Templars*

the institution of the knights of the Hospital generally called the Hospitalers who were engaged in nursing of the sick and the wounded. They added the task of fighting in defence of the holy places to their duties and gradually became a military order primarily.

*Interne-
cine strife among
the Christians
and unity
among the
Moslems :
Problem of
defence of
Jerusalem*

Jerusalem remained in Christian hands until 1187. The interne-
cine strife among the Christians,
their intriguing with the Greeks and Moslems
against one another, the rivalries of the military
orders and merchants finally provoked the Moslems
to seek strength in union. Zangi, lieutenant of the
Governor of Mosul destroyed the oldest of the Latin
states in the east--the county of Edessa (1144).
This made the problem of defence of Jerusalem
more serious.

*Preachings of
St. Bernard*

*Louis VII
and Conrad
III leaders of
the second
crusade*

*Mistake of
choosing land-
route :
Crusaders
treasonably
misled*

(b) **Second Crusade :** The second crusade in
1147 was necessitated by the imminent danger to
Jerusalem from the Saracen rulers of Mosul. The
second crusade was undertaken due to the preaching of
St. Bernard. His preaching was so effective that this
time two kings, Louis VII of France and Conrad III
of Germany were induced to take the cross. Both
kings made the mistake of choosing the land-route to
the east. Most of the German army was destroyed
in Asia Minor, and the French army also suffered
almost as badly. With fragments of their armies
Louis and Conrad reached the Holy Land in 1148.
Plan was finalised to attack Damascus. But when
siege of Damascus was in progress the crusaders
were treasonably misled to change their position
and the armies of both the kings found them in a
place where there was no water supply. The inevit-
able result was withdrawal. They were similarly
deceived when they went to attack Ascalon. Both
Conrad and Louis left for home.

*Loss of
Jerusalem*

(c) **Third Crusade :** The third crusade was
occasioned by the loss of Jerusalem in 1187. Moslem

recovery began in the middle of the twelfth century. Nureddin, son of Zangi captured Damascus and brought all Moslem cities of Syria under one control. It was now recognised by the Christians as well as by the Moslems that the issue between them depended upon the possession of Egypt. Nureddin succeeded in making his trusted nominee Shirkhu the Vizier of Egypt. On Shirkhu's death his nephew Saladin became the Vizier and completed the union of the Mohammedan east and ruled from the Euphrates to the Nile. Thus the little Christian states were all surrounded by a united Islam. The Christian princes in the east, instead of making a united effort to face the Moslem challenge let the kingdom of Jerusalem to be torn into pieces by bitter struggle over succession to the throne. The whole situation was, however, precipitated by Reginald of Challilon, who had come to the east with Louis VII. He was now a vassal of the king of Jerusalem with his fief containing the castles of Kerak and Montreal. Violating a truce of the king of Jerusalem with Saladin, Reginald plundered an Egyptian caravan which was escorting Saladin's sister. Saladin vowed to kill Reginald with his own hand, which he actually did. In 1187 he annihilated a Christian army near Nazareth and within a few months the king of Jerusalem was left with only the city of Tyre. Saladin allowed the rich to buy their freedom from slavery on payment of ransom but released the poor and the aged without any ransom at all. But they were robbed of their belongings which Saladin allowed them to carry with them. It was Saladin, but not the Christians, 'who showed the qualities of a Christian knight'.

*Christian
states
surrounded
by a united
Islam*

Saladin

The attempts of Frederick Barbarossa, Richard I of England, and Philip Augustus of France to recapture Jerusalem failed. Their failure was largely due to their unwillingness to work together. They quarrelled almost continually from the time they

*Frederick
Barbarossa,
Richard I
and Philip
Augustus'*

*attempts to
recapture
Jerusalem*

*Richard the
Lion-hearted*

*Capture of
Richard by
Henry VI*

left home. The capture of Acre, Joppa and Ascalon was the only result of the expedition of their royal armies to the east. Philip Augustus returned home on a pretext. Richard I, the *Lion-hearted* despite many single-handed feats of valour, failed to take Jerusalem. The return of Philip Augustus to France roused suspicion in Henry who also was in a hurry to be back in England. His return journey was dogged by misfortune in the way of ship-wreck and capture at the hands of Henry VI who held him for ransom.

*Pope
Innocent and
the Fourth
Crusade*

(d) **Fourth Crusade :** The fourth crusade was inspired by popular preachers and was led by Pope Innocent III in 1201. Pope Innocent III was determined to recover for the papacy the direction of the crusading movement. He succeeded in rousing the drooping spirit of the westerners into a new effort to win the Holy Land. But the dignified name of 'Fourth Crusade'—it has been remarked, was inappropriate. For, the knights who participated in it were all booty-collecting, career-making people. For the clergy of the Roman church, it was an opportunity to pilfer the wealth and treasures of the Greek church. The appeal of Innocent III to the princes is reminiscent of the eloquence of Pope Urban II before the first crusade. Response came from the French knights and nobles, English, German and Sicilian troops and others.

*Selfish
motives
behind this
crusade*

*Motive of
imperial
expansion*

The leaders of the fourth crusade avoided the difficulties of the land-route. They received food and transport from Venice on payment of eighty-five thousand marks. Venetians also participated in the crusade by adding fifty armed galleys on condition that fifty per cent. of the conquests would go to Venice. This was a sheer imperial expansion motive that impelled the Venetians to the Holy War ! The promised eighty-five thousand marks would not be paid in full. Thirty-four thousand was yet to be paid. The Venetians asked the crusaders to

help them in reconquering the town of Zara which was once under Venice had since become independent after a revolt. If this would be done, the Venetians would not demand the balance of thirty-four thousand marks. Though not without protest the Venetians had to agree under the circumstances. Pope Innocent was furious at the idea of directing the crusaders against a christian town under a Christian king, but he could not prevent it. Zara was taken and razed to the ground (1202). Innocent reacted by excommunicating all the crusaders. 'Instead of reaching the Promised Land, you thirsted for the blood of your brethern' was Innocent III's charge against the crusaders. But soon he released them from the ban of excommunication and even did not object to their associating with the Venetians.

*Crusaders
attacked the
Christian
town of Zara*

In the mean time the situation in Byzantine empire had undergone a great change. Emperor Issac II had been dethroned by his brother Alexius III but Issac's son another Alexius asked for help from Philip of Swabia, his brother-in-law. But the latter having been engaged otherwise, appealed to the crusaders who were in Zara to assist Alexius, son of Issac III to regain his throne. The question of money payment and supply of provisions was settled with the Venetian crusaders at Zara, and both the crusaders from the west and the Venetians set sail for Byzantium (1203). It was not before long that Issac and his son Alexius were again on the Byzantine throne. It was for the first time in 1203 that Constantinople had fallen to outside invasion.

*Crusaders
acted as
mercenaries*

Towards the end of 1203 rebellion broke out in Constantinople and Issac and Alexius were overthrown. Alexius V, son-in-law of Alexius III, was put on the throne. Soon after Issac died and his son Alexius was strangled to death. The Venetians and the crusaders found that they had now to reckon with Alexius V. By a second siege of Constantinople

*Sack of Con-
stantinople*

*Venice
occupied
parts of the
city of
Byzantium,
i.e. Constantinople*

(1204) they again succeeded in taking possession of it. Constantinople fell for the second time. It was sacked. Pillage and destruction for three consecutive days constituted the most wanton crimes of all history. "In all the alleys, in streets, in the temples, complaints, weeping, lamentations, grief, the groaning of men, the shrieks of women, wounds, rape, captivity, the separation of those most closely united" horrified even the most apathetic. From 1204 to 1261 there was no Byzantine empire. Venice took three-eighths of the city, including Santa Sophia, took Adrianople, Gallipoli, and a number of Aegean islands. Venetian colonial empire spread wide and far enough. The rest of the Byzantine empire constituted the Latin empire of Constantinople under Count Baldwin of Flanders as the first emperor. In 1261 the Byzantine empire was restored. From 1261 to 1453 when the Turks occupied Constantinople the Byzantine empire continued to exist.

*Ebbing of
crusading
zeal*

This crusade showed clearly that the crusading zeal had ebbed and the army was diverted to attack Venice's enemy. The later crusades were not serious enough to be compared with the first four.

*Cessation of
crusades :
Causes*

The crusades ceased because of the dying religious zeal. The views of the western Christians had changed during the crusades and the barbarian love of martial adventures was replaced by those feelings and sentiments which characterise the modern society. A more practical view of life and economic ambition naturally made the crusaders' job and the crusades unimportant even to most devout Christians.

*Widespread
influence*

2/ Effects of the Crusades : The crusades brought such lasting and widespread influence upon the western life and society that they may be regarded as a great landmark in the history of civilisation. Rightly does Myers observe: "The crusades exerted

indirectly such an influence upon the institutions and the life of the people of western Europe that they constitute a great landmark in the history of civilisation."

Without doubt the crusades intended to enhance the power of the papacy. The prominent part which the popes took in the crusading enterprises naturally fostered their authority and influence, by placing in their hands, as it were, the armies and resources of the Christendom and by accustoming the people to look to them as guides and leaders. The papal power was also materially strengthened by the military orders of monks called into existence by the crusading enthusiasm, for these orders, generally upheld the papal authority as opposed to that of the episcopate.

*Influence on
the Church*

As to the monasteries, their wealth was augmented enormously by the sale to them for a mere fraction of the actual value, the estates of those preparing for the crusades, or by out-and-out gift of estates by lords for the blessings and prayers of the monks. Often, religious houses were made the guardians of the properties of the crusaders whose death left these in the hands of the religious houses. Again, thousands returning broken in spirit and in health sought asylum in cloisters and endowed with all their worldly goods the establishments they entered. These apart, the stream of the ordinary gifts of piety was swollen, by the extraordinary fervour of religious enthusiasm which characterised the period, into prodigious proportions. These were the ways how the properties of the monasteries were augmented.

*On Monas-
teries*

The crusades also exerted some influence on the development of strong monarchy by weakening the feudal nobility. Many of the nobles who set out on crusading expeditions never returned and their estates through failure of heirs escheated to the

On Politics

Crown while many more wasted their fortunes in meeting the expenses of their undertaking. Thus the nobility was greatly weakened in numbers and influence and the power and patronage of the kings correspondingly increased.

On society The effects of the crusades upon the social life of the western nations were marked and important. They certainly hastened to some extent the liberation of the common people of town and country. Many serfs found in the crusades an opportunity to break from their bondage, and the growth of towns and the development of their industries offered many others an easier escape from the manor. It has also been remarked by historians that the notable change in the status of women during the crusading period may have come about in part due to the larger responsibilities that they were obliged to assume in managing their husbands' lands while they were away. The fresh contacts with the Greeks and the Saracens of the east led to many changes in the features of the daily life in the west.

On economy The medieval towns gained many political advantages at the expense of the crusading barons and princes. Ready money in the twelfth and the thirteenth centuries was largely in the hands of the burgher class and in return for the loans and contributions that they made to their overlords or suzerains, they received charters conferring special privileges. Thus with power and wealth slipping out of the hands of the nobility, the cities and towns were growing in political importance and were making great progress in municipal freedom. The crusades also promoted the prosperity of the towns and cities giving them great impulse in trade and commerce and widening trade relations. During the crusading period Venice, Pisa and Genoa acquired great wealth and reputation through the fostering of their trade due to the demands of the crusaders and by opening up the east. Various

arts, manufactures and inventions were introduced into the west from Asia as a result of the crusades.

The crusades gave incentive to travellers such as the celebrated Venetian Marco Polo to range over the most remote countries of Asia. The spirit of maritime enterprise and adventure which rendered results as seen in the fruitful voyages of Columbus, Vasco da Gama, etc., was also the indirect effect of the crusades. By accustoming men to the idea of travel, the crusaders broke down the wall of narrow provincialism and opened up the era of international dependence.

On geography

The crusades liberalised the minds of the crusaders and thereby paved the way for the coming of men of intellect and ideas into groups. The prejudice of superstition and convention did not prevent such people to come in mutual contact which assisted to a large extent the intellectual quickening that followed. Before the crusades, the Christians of Europe had held bitterest hatred towards the Moslems, but towards the end of the crusades this feeling was to a large extent mitigated. Crusades and voyages corrected many of the false notions of the Europeans about the non-Christians and the eastern countries which liberalised their ideas. Liberalism took the place of the former narrow, provincial, intolerant ideas of the west.

On intellect

The knowledge of geography and of science and learning of the east worked as a stimulus to the west where began the process of the mental activities which took the shape of that intellectual outburst called the Renaissance.

*Paved the
path for
Renaissance*

The greatest influence of the crusades could be traced on literature of the west. The literary materials brought from the east, such as traditions, exploits of heroes, etc., enriched the western literature. Shakespeare and Marlow were directly influenced by the voyagers of the sixteenth century,

*Influence on
literature*

who brought many and varied literary materials from the east.

*On military
science*

The crusades also greatly influenced the military science of the west. The concentric type of large, massive forts and castles, the ideas of siege, etc., were borrowed by the west from the east through the crusaders.

*On architec-
ture*

In architecture there was very little effect indeed. Yet the west began copying the architecture after the manner of the holy sepulchre. The Great Temple Church of London and the Holy Sepulchre Church of Cambridge were built on the plan of the holy sepulchre of Jerusalem.

*Opening of a
new horizon*

Thus the crusades were not only famous in history for their religious enthusiasm but also for lifting the screen from a new horizon. The crusades heralded the coming of a new age.

CHAPTER 17

Monasticism : Scholasticism

1/ Monasticism : THE FORM OF ASCETICISM that the Christian church adopted is called *Monasticism*. Monasticism naturally had its origin in asceticism. The philosophic basis of asceticism was the belief that *matter* is the seat of evil, and therefore, all contacts with *matter* must be avoided. Such ideas grew in people who would like to abandon formalised religion that Christianity had become. Such people sought salvation far away from the crowd, in the solitude of the desert, swamp, forest or mountain fastness. Monasticism came as a protest against the semi-Pagan and semi-Christian form that Christianity had taken in the Roman empire in the fourth century. The licentiousness of the world dismayed more sensitive souls who fled to find peace in seclusion. Renunciation of property, home, kith and kin, and living in poverty, austerity, hardship and loneliness, it was believed, could amend for sin and save from temptations. Mortification of the flesh, scourging of the body and the like, it was thought, ministered to the spiritual life.

*Philosophic
basis of
asceticism*

Renunciation

Yet it must not be thought that the ideal of asceticism came simply as a protest against the falling standard of Christianity. In fact, asceticism began as early as the second century when decay of the Roman empire had strongly set in and violence consequent upon the invasions of the barbarians became widespread. Many people lost interest in life.

*Protest
against
falling
standards*

It must also be pointed out that asceticism is more or less natural to civilised man. It has become institutionalised in many religions. Asceticism was quite strong among the pagans and it is not impossible that Christianity borrowed it from the pagans.

*Origin of
asceticism in
the East*

It originated in the east, like almost all else in Christianity. The fathers of monasticism were two Egyptians, St. Anthony and St. Pachomius.

*Salvation—
through
church and
asceticism*

When asceticism became institutionalised in Christianity, it came to be believed that salvation is attainable in two ways: through the church, and through asceticism.

*Origin
obscure*

The beginning of monasticism is lost in obscurity. It is usually thought that monasticism began in the third century. The earliest monks were hermits who lived either in a hut, or in a cave or in the shadow of a rock or a tree. But in course of time to protect themselves from imposters and other dangers, they began to build their huts close together. Gradually a common chapel, common meal, etc., bound them closer still. As time went on they began to live in houses, each having his own cell and maintained some amount of independence. In this way ascetic life was organised on semi-social basis. Gradually three vows: (i) obedience to the rules and interests of the monastic house, (ii) poverty, and (iii) chastity, had to be taken by every member of the monastic house.

*Protective
measures:
Common
chapel,
common
meal, etc.*

*Three vows:
obedience to
monastic
rules, poverty
and chastity*

*Monks first
seen in the
fourth century*

It is this form of loosely cenobitic life that became common and prevailed in the Greek church. It was in the fourth century (340) that monks were first seen in the west when Athasius brought two of them with him to Rome. These monks excited both curiosity and disgust among the Romans until Augustine and Jerome supported their mode of life and monasticism began to spread in the west rapidly. The spirit of the west took hold of it, organised it and it became one of the most effective tools in the hands of the pope and the emperor to Christianise and civilise the barbarians and extend the church and the state.

*Monastery
of three types:*

Monastic clergy were of three types: Greek, Benedictine and Celtic. To begin with each monastic

house or monastery made its own rules of discipline. But Benedict of Nursia succeeded in harmonising the rules of different monasteries into a common code. After a monastic life of several years Benedict went to Monte Cassino, near Naples with several of his associates and founded the monastery of Monte Cassino and prepared his rule, famous as *Benedictine Rule*. He succeeded in organising the monks into a close corporation and none was permitted to leave the monastery without the consent of the Abbot. Rules of monastic duties were drawn up by him and strict discipline was enforced and the three vows of poverty, chastity and obedience had to be taken by all. The eastern monasticism had a hold on Italy before Benedict. But Pope Gregory the Great established Benedictine rule in many places in Italy, Sicily and England. Circumstances favoured the spread of Benedictine rule to many monasteries. In the seventh century Benedict's rule was much more widely used. In the eighth century it was the only form of monasteries both in Gaul and Germany. In the next century Benedict's rule of monasticism governed more than forty thousand monastic houses. It was, however, under the bishops of Rome that the monks were made scholars and also missionaries. Benedict did never contemplate these aspects of the monks. Papacy gradually came to use monks in such a way that it seemed as if the monks were peculiarly suited for missionary work. Ireland, Central Europe, Spain, Italy and Britain were also influenced by Celtic monasticism. It was through the monks that the barbarians were converted into Christianity. Cassiodorus, the prime minister of Theodoric the Great made it a rule for the monks to spend some time every day in study. This was imitated by the monks of every monastery, till at last every monastery became a seat of learning, and of scholars. It was the learning and scholarship of the western monks that had distinguished them

*Greek,
Benedictine
and Celtic*

*Benedictine
Rule*

*Spread of
Benedictine
monasticism*

*Monasteries
became seats
of learning*

from the monks of the east who had nothing to do with learning.

*Regular and
secular clergy
among
monastics*

It must, however, be mentioned that the monks were not necessarily clergymen. There were more of laymen to begin with, to become monks. Monastic life came to be regarded as an ideal life for the Christians and laymen joined the monkish order. The monks who would live in monastic houses together came to be regarded as *regular clergy* whereas those who lived in outlying districts or villages came to be called *secular clergy*. This was due to the great esteem in which the monks living in monasteries were held.

*Cluniac
reforms*

In the tenth century monasticism was in a state of wretchedness and decline. St. Benedict's rule was so universally disregarded that it seemed that it was forgotten. Monasticism was on the verge of extinction. It was from this slough of degeneration that it was raised by the reform movement set afoot by the monastery at Cluny. Cluniac reform programme stressed celibacy of the monks and the clergy, complete authority of the monks and the clergy over the laity in religious matters, clerical investiture, etc. The discipline and new ideas of the Cluniac monks soon made it possible for the monastery of Cluny to send out colonies of monks and to establish new monasteries.

*Orders of
Carthusians,
Cistercians,
Premonstrants,
Carmelites,
etc.*

In the next century (11th) monastic spirit acquired a much greater puritanism and to many even the rule of the Cluny was considered as lax. This extraordinary puritanic spirit gave rise to several orders like the *Carthusians*, *Cistercians*, *Premonstrants*, *Carmelites*, etc.

*Luxury and
idleness*

(a) **Evils of Monasticism** : Monasticism was not always an excellent thing. In days of its decadence monasteries became decrepit. The monasteries originally by their piety, social service, and virtue

earned a great popularity. This brought them wealth along with honour. But with the growth of wealth came in luxury and idleness. The monks who were formerly models of virtue ceased to be so. They ceased to perform their traditional functions of education, hospitality and charity. Further, when the dignity of family life was fast growing, monasticism who opposed to that and did not accord proper position of woman in society. There was yet another evil that arose from monasticism. The talents of the society would often be drawn into the monastic life and that was a great loss to the society. After all, the ideal of personal salvation was purely selfish.

Ceased to perform their traditional functions

(b) **Contributions of Monasticism :** But the evils of monasticism were far outweighed by the good that came out of it. If many of the best talents were lost to the society, monasticism more than compensated that loss by rendering untold services to it in the name of God. The work of the monk as a student, scholar, teacher, copyist, author was enough to justify his profession. Good monks with their lofty character and moral virtues were models of Christian life and were an inspiration to common people, nobility and the secular clergy as well. The monasteries were comfortable havens for the weary travellers, were almshouses for the needy, hospitals for the sick.

Good outweighed evils of monasticism

Monks-models of Christian life

From the monasteries men knew how to drain and till land scientifically, how to build and organise educational institutions, how to manage large household without confusion. If men learned "to value economy, punctuality and dispatch, nay more, if minor obligations of social life, unwritten laws of natural respect, good breeding, and politeness have grown up amongst men, those were all derived from the monasteries". Likewise the landlords, the court, the universities, merchants, the architect, the artists, the musician and the author, the stone-mason, the jeweller, worker in metal, the carpenter, the weaver,

Diverse knowledge

Excellent qualities

the gardener, etc., and men of many more trades, each learned the lesson of his peculiar trade or craft from the societies of monks.

*Monks used
for conversion
to Christi-
anity*

The papacy used the monks for the purposes of conversion. Pope Gregory the Great sent monks to convert the Anglo-Saxons of Britain. Monasticism furnished the missionaries who converted and civilised western and northern Europe.

*Monastery—
centre of life
and learning*

Every monastery was a centre of life and learning and served as a beacon to the surrounding.

*Monasteries
kept lamp of
learning
burning*

In times of violence learning and literature found a refuge in the monasteries. The lamp of learning was kept burning in the monasteries which facilitated the Renaissance of the sixteenth century.

*Monasticism
died out in
the sixteenth
century*

The monasteries and monasticism were excellent things of those days. But in the fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries monasticism had no longer any great mission to fulfil. Other institutions had then grown up to carry the work begun by monasticism. In the fifteenth century monasticism began to die out.

*Friars
different from
monks*

2/ The Friars : The word *friar* is derived from Latin *frater*. It was used for the new mendicant orders. The friars were altogether different from the monks. While the monks were primarily concerned with their own salvation through practice of asceticism in places far removed from the evil contamination of the world, the friars were evangelical orders whose salvation was conceived in terms of bringing salvation to others by teaching and preaching in the language of the people. The monks grew out of rural society and the necessity of self-support made them start agriculture. Their services to agriculture, building, art, learning, etc., were incidental to their main purpose. The friars were predominantly urban orders for it was in towns that the need for their work was greatest. Of the friars

*Franciscan
and Domi-
nican friars*

two brotherhoods—Franciscan and Dominicans were of the greatest importance.

The order of the Franciscans was founded of Francis, later made a Saint, of Assisi (1182–1226). He was a man in whom there was a grace and delicacy which made him infinitely lovely. He was the son of a cloth merchant, with no taste for trader's career. Open-handed, open-hearted, gay and high-spirited, he became a leader of the young men of Assisi and dreamed of becoming a knight but illness turned the current of his thought. He was filled with the idea of imitation of Christ. Life of Jesus was to be his model in all things. According to him, the mission of the Franciscans also called the Minorites or Brother Minors, was "to preach saying that the kingdom of Heaven is at hand"; to heal the sick, cleanse the leper, raise the dead, cast out devils, freely to give. To provide neither gold nor silver, neither two coats nor food beyond the day's requirement. A Franciscan should work for his bread if work could be found, if not he might beg. He must not receive money under any circumstances. He was to recover the lost, cheer the downcast, in a word, to be to the world a *Christ*. Poverty was to be mistress of his heart. He was not to be gloomy but to be glad and merry and becomingly courteous. He was to be "a saint among the saints, and among sinners he was as one of themselves."

*Francis of
Assisi
founder of
Franciscan
Friars*

Their duties

With the entry of thousands into the Franciscan order and with the bounteous offers of countless supporters, the order acquired immense wealth and it became clear that Francis' simple ideal and poverty were impossible to be practised by the order. St. Francis died, for this reason, a disappointed and tired man who saw modification of his own rule despite himself.

*Acquisition
of immense
wealth*

The papacy was originally not much willing to confirm St. Francis' plan to establish a new order. But did so ultimately, for it saw that this order

*Attitude of
the papacy
towards the
Franciscans*

could be used as a great absorber of the critical tendency against the church if the church brought it under its control. Although it was never the intention of the founder, the Franciscan order received privileges from the pope, of preaching and even hearing confession independently of the ecclesiastical authorities. All this made the Franciscan friars enemies of the parish priests whose privileges they were now sharing making them less important. This was a major cause of decline of the Franciscan order. This apart, the order was split into two parts, one of moderates and other of spirituals, the former favouring change from the ideals set forth by St. Francis and the latter remaining faithful to St. Francis. This split was the greatest cause of the decline of the Franciscan order.

*Split in
Franciscan
order : Its
decline*

*Dominican
Friars*

The Dominican friars founded by St. Dominic was confirmed as an Order by Pope Honourius III in 1216. St. Dominic was a noble Castilian and came over to southern France in service of his bishop. He became convinced that the only intelligent way to combat heresy was to remove the ignorance of both the laity and the clergy. His order was, therefore, of preachers trained in theology who were ready to be sent anywhere and capable of preaching the vernacular tongues. Dominicans joined universities and began to capture chairs of Theology and Philosophy in order to control opinion of the educated from the centres of learning. The Dominicans subordinated everything else to learning and study. St. Dominic like St. Francis made poverty the rule of the Order and the two Orders of Franciscan friars and Dominican friars had very much the same development; not intending to be rich by their founders, becoming rich, large and powerful in course of time. The Dominicans, and to some extent the Franciscans, furnished all great scholars of the later Middle Ages.

*Dominicans
captured
university
chairs in
Theology and
Philosophy*

*Dominicans
supplied
largest number
of scholars of
the Middle
Ages*

St. Dominic did not impress by his personality as did St. Francis yet his chief contribution was his building up an organisation for his friars which St. Francis failed to provide. The Franciscans adopted the organisation of the Dominican order. The most essential feature of the Dominican order was election by majority votes of delegates to representative bodies. Each of the Dominican houses elected its *prior* and one representative who formed the *provincial chapter* which met annually. A provincial *prior*, visitors, and a group of four administrators would govern the province. The general chapter of the entire Order was composed of the elected master general, provincial priors and elected representatives from each province. Both the Dominicans and the Franciscans had auxiliary Orders of the nuns.

*Organisation
of the Domi-
nican Order*

*Prior :
Provincial
chapter*

St. Dominic and his Order drove back the heretics to the fold of the church. St. Dominic was called the *Hammer of Heretics* and his followers *Hounds of God*. The papacy organised a new institution, the *Inquisition*, the purpose of which was to bring back the heretics within the fold of the church by stringent means. In this work both the Dominicans and the Franciscans were often associated. The church believed far more in repression than persuasion in dealing with the heretics. The Inquisitor would summon all heretics to present themselves before him. He could bring the heretics before him, if necessary through the officials of the civil government. The heretics were given a specific time to confess and forsake their false belief. Torture, solitary confinement, death at the stake, were the usual punishments for the heretics.

*Heretics
brought back
to the fold of
the church*

Inquisition

The friars spread a great influence in Europe. After the initial religious zeal was over, the mendicant friars began to supply Europe, for a century that followed, with most of the leaders of thought and learning. Originally the study of the friars was restricted to theology but soon they developed a

*Influence of
the Friars*

Friars and education

system of *Studia* for arts, philosophy as well as theology. The Dominican and Franciscan friars surpassed their secular rivals in the universities and chairs of philosophy, theology, etc., were occupied by them. When the distinguished professor Alexander of Hales joined the Order at Paris and still greater intellect Robert Grosseteste became a lecturer to the friars at Oxford, the future of the friars was assured. Pope Innocent IV ordered the Chancellor of Paris to permit the qualified friars to teach. At first there was great resentment against this order of the pope. But ultimately under Pope Alexander IV, at Paris and Oxford the privileges granted to the friars were enforced. From the Dominicans were produced distinguished scholars like Albert the Great, St. Thomas Aquinas. They compiled co-operative works such as the revision of the text of the Vulgate, Biblical Concordances, and Encyclopaedia—the *Speculum mains* by Vincent Beauvais. The Dominicans in 1286 decreed that they must defend the doctrine of Aquinas. This meant binding the Dominicans intellectually. In this regard the Franciscans were free. In fact, they took the leadership of the movement of ideas. Most important Franciscan intellectual was Grosseteste who founded a school at Oxford where most eminent members were Adam Marsh and Roger Bacon. This school championed independence of judgment, first-hand experiment, study of languages, physics, etc., without simply blindfold dependence on authority. Duns Scotus and Ockham were practical scholars who brought philosophy from its speculative heights to commonsense level based on observation and induction.

*Thomas Aquinas**Grosseteste**Roger Bacon**Duns Scotus and Ockham**Contributions to popular preachings*

The contributions of the friars to popular preachings were as important as their intellectual achievements. The new method of preaching by the friars made them exceedingly popular. Their preachings,

specially of the Franciscans, led to the formation of fraternities of penitence among their hearers.

The adven-terous Franciscans were sent to the Far East to the court of Mongol Khan of Karakorum, they established an archbishopric at Pekin. In the fourteenth century with the rise of Moslem Tamerlane in Transoxiana all these missions were doomed to extinction. Yet the friars opened the route to Central and Further Asia to traders including the famous Marco Polo.

*Franciscans
sent to the
court of
Mongol
Khan*

3/ Scholasticism : Scholasticism as Orton has chosen to define it, was the 'study of theological metaphysics and of metaphysical theology'. In other words, it was the continuous effort of the medieval schoolmen to give a rational form to their beliefs and to plan out by reason an intelligible framework of the world and man. In the Middle Ages connection between literary education and church was very close. It was natural that the effect of such close connection produced a predominantly theological colour for their philosophy. The chief task of the scholastics or schoolmen was reducing of Christian doctrines to scientific form, harmonizing of faith and reason. It must, however, be mentioned that the task of rationalising Christianity and the new secular learning into a synthetic, coherent whole was neither easy nor likely to succeed. For Christianity was based on supernatural revelation, utterly irrational to be accepted on faith, and faith alone. Science, on the other hand, was a matter of experience and of reason and the two were irreconcilable and incompatible. These are two different kinds of truth, truth of religion and truth of science or reason. Yet the men who undertook the task were no less eminent than Peter Abelard and Thomas Aquinas. They themselves exposed the breach between religion and science. Peter Abelard said that God's will rules the universe no doubt but rules it by certain natural cause. Here Peter Abelard seeks to

Definition

*Chief task
of the school-
men*

*Aquinas and
Abelard
harmonised
religion and
science*

harmonize religion and science. But even Abelard said that he would not assume to expound the inscrutable will of God. Here he spoke as a scientist and wanted to investigate these natural causes. Thomas Aquinas, however, distinguished between revealed theology and natural theology, *i.e.* philosophy and was himself concerned with the latter.

*Preparation
for the
Protestant
Reformation*

Again schoolmen interested in science naturally began to talk of the necessity of experiments and of basing knowledge on experience. In this way the scholastics or schoolmen were preparing the way for exclusive concern with science by keeping the revealed theology to the domain of faith alone. Curiously enough their greater emphasis on science, *i.e.* reason made them to return to the scriptures, and they in fact prepared the stage for the Protestant Reformation as they prepared the ground for open conflict between science and religion.

*Albertus
Magnus*

Albertus Magnus, a German, who pursued an active career as teacher and scholar in many German towns, and specially at the Universities of Cologne and of Paris made translations of Aristotle in an intelligible manner and sought to harmonize Aristotle with Christianity. He was a prolific writer and many of his works duplicated those of Aristotle—*Physics, Concerning the Soul, The causes of the creation of the universe, Concerning heaven and earth, etc., etc.* Albertus Magnus, *i.e.* Albert the Great had a specially scientific attitude of mind and knew Greek and Arabic sciences. He was aware of the necessity of testing scientific knowledge by observation and experiment.

*Ground pre-
pared for
western
philosophy*

The most illustrious scholastics of the thirteenth century were Albert the Great and Thomas Aquinas of whom, mention has been made before. Aquinas' reputation rested chiefly on his *Summa Theologiae* which earned him the title of *Angelic Doctor*. Both Albert the Great and his pupil Aquinas prepared

the ground for the development of western philosophy by distinguishing theology from philosophy.

Roger Bacon was another very noteworthy representative of the scientific activities of the scholastic age. His chief writings *Opus majus* anticipated the principles of modern inductive science laid down by Francis Bacon four centuries later. Roger Bacon insisted that theology needed a wide and deep foundation of knowledge of the world in which men live and that observation and experiment are the basis of science. Astrology, alchemy and magic, medicine and various other branches of science made progress due to the contributions of the scholastics. Despite the shortcomings and failures of the medieval scientists they preserved the heritage of the Graeco-Roman science. Without their translations some of the important Arabic scientific works would have been lost to the world.

*Roger Bacon
representative
of scientific
scholasticism*

*Advancement
of Astrology,
Alchemy,
Medicine,
Magic, etc., at
the hands of
scholastics*

During the fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries scholasticism was on its way to decline. In the hands of the unworthy successors philosophy fell into sheer idle and barren disputation. The scholastics were no longer held in esteem by the people as their predecessors. Hence the scholastics made room for the humanists.

*Decline due
to unworthy
successors*

Yet it will not be giving the scholastics their due unless it is mentioned that they rendered a great service to the intellectual progress of Europe. Their debates and disputations, the questions they raised, sharpened the intellect and wits of men and gave them an unwonted deftness in arguments. They gave the minds of the intelligentsia a proper exercise in the universities and schools where they taught, which led to an awakening which again led to more fruitful work in future.

*Services of the
scholastics
to intellectual
progress*

CHAPTER 18

Medieval Universities

*Universities
—Most
important
contribution
of Catholic
Church*

1/ Origin and growth : OF ALL MEDIEVAL INSTITUTIONS, except the Catholic Church, handed down to the posterity, the universities were perhaps the most important and have remained insofar as their organisation was concerned, unchanged. The university, Latin *universitas* was originally one of the several vague words which meant association of people or the whole body of teachers and students. The university headed by a chancellor and divided into colleges, administered by deans or rectors, in which a faculty presents a definite curriculum at fixed hours to a group of students who take academic degrees, goes back to twelfth and early thirteenth centuries.

*Defence of
the church
helped the
growth of
universities*

Influences other than love of new learning, favoured the growth of the earliest universities. The heresy of the twelfth century needed some kind of institution where a large number of students could be trained to defend the dogma and the organisation of the church. The church by the twelfth century had developed into a massive organisation which required the services of lawyers for its courts, men trained in the formalities and intricacies of correspondence for its chancelleries. The feudal kings and the lords also needed the services of civil servants trained in law and in the use of the Latin language. The fast growing towns with autonomous existence likewise needed the services of lawyers and administrators. The scholarship of the twelfth century was well adapted to meet these needs.

*Feudal kings
and towns
needed the
help of
lawyers and
administra-
tors*

*No mention
of specific
date possible*

It is impossible to mention any specific date about the emergence of the oldest universities. They took form in the twelfth century. It was not in one way

only that the universities grew up. (i) Secular schools which were numerous in Italy developed into universities. (ii) Universities also grew up when scholars flocked round eminent teachers. Scholars from different nations used to flock round great teachers. The fact that such scholars came from different nations without restriction also explained the name 'university'. (iii) Migration of scholars also gave rise to new universities, as in the cases of Oxford and Cambridge. (iv) When the models had been perfected, it became the usual practice to found universities by royal charter. (v) Some of the universities, for example, those of Bologna and Paris were originally organised as guilds. Like other guilds, these educational guilds or universities sought and obtained same kind of autonomy as any other.

about emergence of universities; Causes helping rise of universities: Secular schools and eminent teachers; much use of university; Migration of scholars; Royal charter; Educational guilds

The very name *University* has its own history. The original name was *universitas magistrorum et scholarium* which practically meant a guild of masters or scholars. But in the twelfth century the term *Studium Generale* was being used for institutions which may be compared to what we understand by university. Bologna was the first of the West European cities to enlarge its school into a *studium generale*, which was the name for medieval university. The University of Pavia received its charter of *studium generale* in 1361 and transformed from a school into a university. Roman law was being studied in many of the schools since ninth century. Rome, Ravenna and Orleans were schools which revived the study of the Roman law since the ninth century, Milan, Narbonne and Lyons in the tenth and Verona, Mantua and Angers in the eleventh. Many of these were later transformed into universities. The Bologna University was, however, the most important centre of the study of law and with Irnerius as teacher of law in that university the golden age of medieval jurisprudence began—it is said. *Summa Codicis Irnerii*—a compilation of the lectures by

Initial names of universities: Universitas magistrorum et scholarium, Studium Generale

Transformation of schools into universities: Bologna, Pavia

University of Bologna seat of law studies

*Salerno :
Medicine ;
Rise of
universities
like those of
Vicenza,
Arezzo,
Padua, Venice,
Naples, etc.*

Irnerius himself, is regarded a masterpiece of exposition and argument. At Salerno there began a specialised study in medicine. The school of Salerno maintained the tradition of Graeco-Roman study of science, kept touch with the Byzantine physicians and gained knowledge of Arabic medicine from Sicily. It was in the twelfth and the thirteenth centuries that Italy broke out into universities, some of them were spawned by Bologna through the emigration of professors and students. Thus there arose in Italy many universities of which those of Vicenza, Arezzo, Padua, Venice, Naples, etc., may be specially mentioned.

*Distinguished
scholars in
universities*

Yet, the unquestioned leader of the European mind in the twelfth and the thirteenth centuries, was France. Many of the French Cathedral schools, as distinguished from the secular schools of Italy, achieved international renown. These schools flowered into a great University at Paris which became a centre of intellect, finance, science, arts and philosophy. William Champeaux played the same part in the University of Paris as did Irnerius in the University of Bologna. But Peter Abelard was the most unrivalled lecturer of the University of Paris whose fame drew crowds of students from different parts of Europe and thus gave the University of Paris an unprecedented distinction. Theology, canon law, medicine and arts were the four special branches or faculties into which the University of Paris was divided since the middle of the thirteenth century.

*University
of Paris*

*Universities
of Oxford
and Cambridge*

The University of England was an offshoot of the political union of France and England under the Angevins. In the mid-twelfth century England was part of the Angevin empire and the first English university, namely the University of Oxford was modelled on the studium of Paris. The central position of Oxford as well as its importance as a market town conditioned the growth of the Oxford

University. By the middle of the thirteenth century the University of Oxford became second only to the University of Paris. Migration of scholars from Oxford to Cambridge in 1209 led to the foundation of a new school which was raised to the status of a university in 1233 by the bishop of Ely.

The Spanish universities had rather an unconventional beginning. Whereas the Studium Generale of almost all countries in the medieval times had their origin in schools or were founded by teachers who spread out of a university, as in the case of Cambridge, the Spanish universities were all originated by royal charter. The Universities of Palencia, Valladolid, Salamanca, etc., were all founded by royal charter. Naturally, these were under government control.

Spanish universities—greater government control

The curriculum which included the study of liberal arts was divided into two parts, the *Trivium* and *Quadrivium*. The universities admitted students from everywhere and their graduates had the right to teach anywhere. The universities would offer instruction in at least one of the professional subjects—law, medicine, theology, etc. The degree conferred by the university faculties would signify that the degree holder had the right to teach the subject and he was recognised to be a member of the teaching guild. Four or even five years of study would qualify a student for sitting for the Bachelor's degree on passing an examination, the *Trivium*. After that, four more years would be necessary to complete the course of *Quadrivium*, with special attention to Aristotle, when a student would become master of the subject. A doctoral degree would require continued study up to the age of thirty-five. No one below that age could be a doctor. A public defence of the thesis had to be made by the student from six in the morning till six in the evening and theoretically, any person was at liberty to put any question to him. The scholar was then

Curriculum: Trivium and Quadrivium

University degrees passports to undertake teaching in any university

Period of study

Testing of the scholar

to inaugurate his teaching career with a specimen lecture. His degree was then conferred on him.

*Nature of
administration and
conduct of
students*

Earliest universities had no buildings of their own and classes met in any available church building or rented halls. Students had to sit on the floor, later on benches were used. Disciplined conduct was demanded of the students. Yet there were many cases of student rowdism. The rowdies would enter into fight with the citizens, would stone their houses on occasions. But there were serious students who minded their studies with much care and attention, as we also have in our own times.

Text books

Courses of studies were based on text-books which the teachers would read and elaborate in lectures. Commentaries on the text-books had to be made extempore. There was no paper, and the price of parchments was so high that students could not afford to buy them. Often the students used to combine in purchasing text-books which were in manuscripts. Students would discuss and exchange notes after hearing the lectures of their teachers.

Robert of Sorbonne began the system of residential college

Robert de Sorbonne a Chaplain of St. Louis of France, founded a college to furnish free board and lodging to twenty students. This was the beginning of residential colleges.

Impossible to overrate importance of the universities

2/ Influence and importance of Universities : Twelfth century was remarkable for the development of education and the most remarkable in it was the development of the universities. It is impossible to overrate the influence that the medieval universities had exercised on the life of the middle ages. The importance that the university had acquired may be easily understood from the common saying that three powers to guide the world were the church, the king and the university (Sacerdotum, Regnum and the Studium).

*Sacerdotum,
Regnum and
Studium*

The universities as corporate bodies were makers

of public opinion. It was from the time of the growth of the universities that the leadership of the social and cultural life and at a later stage of the political life was coming into the hands of the universities.

*Universities
—makers of
public opinion*

The theology of the western church was largely shaped in the University of Paris and the canon law if not created at Bologna was taught there. Wherever the Roman law or canon law was taught, it became a training ground for lawyers of almost every country.

*University of
Paris—shaped
theology of
western
church; Study
of Roman law*

At the time when the great schism had disrupted Europe, the University of Paris took the lead of the Conciliar Movement to combat the schism.

*Leadership
of Conciliar
Movement*

The universities with their specialised courses and assemblage of qualified teachers, became homes of advancement in creative thought as was displayed in scholasticism.

*Universities
houses of ad-
vancement in
creativethought*

The educative influence of the universities upon those who had opportunities to receive training there made the later great men of affairs who directed and guided the destinies of many a country and society.

*Educative
influence of
the universi-
ties*

Education imparted by the universities made opportunities open before the poor and the younger sons of nobles, who were of not much importance to the society otherwise, to rise to great heights. This was the beginning of the principle 'career must be open to talents'. Today a peasant's son in the university is not at all astonishing.

*Universities
offered oppor-
tunities for
rising to great
heights*

Persons educated in the universities took up the lawyers' duty both in the state and the church, and were the basis of the bureaucracies of church and state.

*Universities
produced
lawyers*

The rapid expansion of universities and colleges and the huge number of the students reading therein showed the unprecedented and the growing intellectual enthusiasm that had gripped the European societies of the time.

*Unprecedented
intellectual
enthusiasm*

CHAPTER 19

The Medieval Towns

<i>Eleventh century witnessed positive signs of recovery</i>	1/ The Growth of Towns : AFTER THE LAPSE OF SEVERAL CENTURIES since the break-up of the Roman empire, the eleventh was the first to witness positive signs of economic recovery in Western Europe. We hear of enhanced commercial activities, of new commercial settlements along highways and water-routes, of draining of vast swamps and projected expansion in agriculture and all that, in the eleventh century.
<i>Obscurity about origin of towns</i>	The history of the cities during the first ten centuries of the Christian era is obscure. The old Gallic and Roman towns suffered much during the barbarian invasions. But as the barbarians began to settle down to quieter life, the towns and cities began to assume their former importance and activities. During and after the barbarian invasions the control of the towns and cities lost their municipal form of government and passed into the hands of bishops or nobles, or sometimes control was divided between bishops and nobles. It was Charles the Great who introduced some uniformity into the government of the cities by placing each of these under an officer with the title of <i>Count</i> . These counts were either churchmen or laymen, and were responsible for their government to Charles. They ruled the cities in the name of the emperor. But after the dismemberment of the empire when feudalism was established, these counts assumed a feudal proprietorship over these cities.
<i>Barbarian invasion: municipal government of towns and cities lost</i>	
<i>Charles the Great's system of countship</i>	
<i>Growth of towns and cities in the twelfth century</i>	Throughout the twelfth century towns and cities steadily grew in increasing numbers and were of diverse origin, and varied greatly in legal status, size and importance; each different from the other yet all had some family resemblance.

The violence of the times, specially the invasions of the Huns and Norsemen, compelled people to live together in walled enclosures, and these in course of time became cities.

Growth of trade and commerce also encouraged establishment of towns and cities. Towns on trade-routes by land and water grew up in this way.

Inside the towns everything was crammed into their narrow space surrounded by walls and closely guarded gates. Churches, chapels, monasteries, counting houses, town halls, guild and fraternity houses, dwelling houses of the leading citizens of the towns, schools, colleges and universities were all to be found in eminent towns and cities.

The most noteworthy characteristics of the town life was the organisations of people of common interests into guilds. The chief land-owners and traders formed the merchants' guild while the manufacturers of the same article or commodity would form into separate guilds of their own, called craft guilds. Weavers' guild, spinners' guild, shoemakers' guild, millers' guild, carpenters' guild, bakers' guild, etc., were the illustrations of craft guilds.

It may be noted that cities of different parts of Europe had different causes behind their growth. The Italian cities had the advantage of taking share in the trade that passed through the Mediterranean between the European and the Asiatic continents. Acquisition of wealth led to the acquisition of power. The main causes of the growth and development of the Italian towns were their trade with the East and the fillip that it received as a result of the crusades.

Towns also grew up once the itinerant traders settled down in one or other place and became merchants.

Violence of the time and invasion of Huns and Norsemen induced living within walled enclosures ;

Growth of trade and commerce—encouraged development of towns and cities ;

Towns and cities had every necessary institution within them ;

Guilds—the most characteristic part of town life

Cities of different parts had different causes behind their growth

Itinerant traders settled down giving rise to towns

*Episcopal
centres and
monasteries
nucleus of
towns*

Walled episcopal centres and monasteries also served as nucleus of towns.

*Wealth and
power made
Italian towns
and cities
self-governing
states*

With the coming of wealth came power and the chief Italian towns became self-governing states with only a seeming dependence upon the pope or the emperor. In the course of time some of the more important cities became entirely independent republics. There was also a competition among the large and the small cities. For instance, the comparatively small cities of Amalfi, Siena and a dozen other towns were laid low by cities like Venice, Milan, Florence, Genoa, etc.

French cities

France had her cities and St. Louis' grandiose settlement in Provence, Aigues-Mortes, towns of Champagne which were proudest in Europe during the twelfth century, but lost their importance. They attracted no trade or commerce. In many of them grass grew again and they reverted to their former agricultural states. In France not a single city became independent republic. French cities did not even succeed in ridding themselves entirely of the feudal lords. After much struggle the cities acquired some measure of liberties and in many cases liberties were purchased on payment to the lords. The cities of France may be divided into three categories according to the measure of liberties they succeeded in acquiring. In the first category were the cities called *villes de bourgeoisie* besides personal liberties of the citizens some remission of feudal dues was allowed.

*Three
categories of
French cities :*

*Villes de
bourgeoisie*

*Consular
cities*

The second category called the *consular cities* acquired all rights of administration except the administration of justice. The courts remained in the hands of the lords. The consuls were responsible to the lords for the administration of the cities. The institution of the consuls was, needless to point out, was an imitation of the Roman system.

The third category of cities were communes proper. The lords' rights over the cities were recognised in two ways, namely, the city paid the lord certain tolls and taxes and could hear appeals from the cities but the lord was excluded from the administration of the cities. At the head of the administration was the mayor assisted by a council. The violence in the communes and the mismanagement of their administration led to the destruction of the French communes and gradually the power of administration was assumed by the king.

Communes

In Germany the traders and later in history with the coming of the Vikings, their Viking successors were itinerant traders. The tendency of these traders to colonise one or the other place or to settle in some convenient places gave rise to many towns and cities. The Rhenish towns particularly acquired eminence as towns and cities in the twelfth century.

*German towns :
Rhenish towns acquired eminence*

The medieval English towns were small like most of their continental sisters, with population varying between one and six thousand. Only York and London were exceptions. The importance of the city of London would be noticed even in the Anglo-Saxon period.

*English towns :
Small in size*

The towns of medieval Europe differed radically from those of the near east, Arab world and also of Russia. These non-European towns and cities were often far more advanced than the European in technology, hygiene, industrialisation and the general level of civilisation. Between the ninth and the twelfth centuries even the Russian towns were superior to many towns of Northern Europe.

Medieval European town differed from those of Near East, Arabia, Russia, etc.

Everywhere in Europe the object of the towns and cities was freedom from serfdom and its annoying entanglements. The townsman wanted freedom of movement, freedom of trade, freedom to marry,

Freedom the main object of towns

*Efforts at
municipal
independence*

freedom for his children to inherit his property without any interference from his lord. The struggle for such liberties succeeded in a large measure and charters were granted guaranteeing privileges to the towns. The towns could offer shelter to anybody even the runaway slaves and serfs who after a period of continuous stay in the cities or towns would become free. Hence arose the fiction "city air makes man free". If there were some fully independent towns as the republican cities of Italy, most towns never secured more than elementary urban liberties. These towns were under the control of municipal magistrates; supreme judicial authority, powers of taxation, military command regularly remained with the lord or the suzerain. While the secular lords agreed more easily to the status of partial autonomy of the towns, the ecclesiastical lords were slow in coming to terms. In Northern Italy and along the Rhine the towns had to wrest privileges from their ecclesiastical lords through violence.

*Problem of
defence*

The towns had their problems of defending their liberties and for that purpose maintain militia, pay both for defence and administration by taxation.

*Formation of
Leagues*

As it was well nigh impossible for any town to defend itself alone, there arose union of towns such as the Lombard League of North Italy, Spanish League, Rhenish League, Swabian League, and the Hanseatic League. In the autonomous towns the representatives of the different guilds in which the population was organised carried on the administration. No foreigner was allowed to trade in the town without becoming a member of any guild.

*Equality of
towns*

Equality of status was the chief characteristic of the guilds and hence of the towns. All had to serve for the defence of the country and pay for it. This was necessary due to the smallness of the population of the town.

2/ Contributions of the Medieval Towns :

The urban revolution in the eleventh and the twelfth centuries had far-reaching economic, social, political and cultural effects. The contributions of the medieval towns have to be discussed with reference to these diverse aspects.

Far-reaching economic, social, political and cultural effects

(a) To the society the medieval towns introduced two new classes, (i) the bourgeoisie of merchants, bankers, capitalists, industrialists, etc., and (ii) the working classes of both skilled and unskilled labourers. With the introduction of these two classes the major part of the economic, social and even political history of the west was dominated by these two classes. In the working classes of skilled and unskilled labourers we see the beginning of the proletariat class of the future and in the bourgeoisie we notice the beginnings of a new order, i.e. the *third estate* or the commons destined to play so important part in modern history.

Social: Introduction of two new classes

Beginning of the proletariat class

The towns played an important part in undermining the feudal and manorial systems. Possession of land was no longer the only title to rank and status. Fortunes earned through industry and trade made the capitalists equally, if not more, important than the former.

Undermining of the feudal and manorial systems

The towns and the cities became haven of freedom for the serfs. Serfdom received its burial ground in towns where they were no longer bound by feudal ties and could sell their agricultural produce in open market for money. Runaway serfs could get easy shelters in towns and cities where a continuous stay for ninety days would make them free citizens. From this practice emerged the fiction 'city air makes man free'.

Towns and cities haven of freedom

(b) In their political effects, the towns may be said to have contributed to the emergence of absolute national monarchy. The kings relied on the middle class, i.e. the bourgeoisie and drew the burghers with

Political: Emergence of national monarchy

Emergence of Parliaments, States General, Cortes the *Parliaments* and *States Generals* or the *Cortes*. In the bourgeoisie, *i.e.* the *third estate* the kings found a natural ally against the feudal anarchy and recalcitrance. The middle class paid for the maintenance of the standing army which freed the kings from dependence on feudal military service. Without the middle class the political development of the later middle ages and of the modern times is inconceivable.

Economic : (c) Economically the medieval towns may be regarded as a transitional structure bridging the medieval with the modern economic systems. *Medieval towns and cities independent economic units :* Medieval towns and cities formed into independent economic units with their respective customs barriers. It worked as an intermediate stage between the natural economy of modern states and the medieval manor. *Mercantilism* *Mercantilism* which began with the medieval towns was one of the major economic weapons in the hands of the absolute monarchs of Europe.

Centres of industrial and commercial life Medieval towns and cities were centres of industrial and commercial life and it was from the medieval towns that the system of international exchange and traffic emerged, which forms one of the most characteristic features of modern European civilisation.

Cultural : (d) Culturally speaking, the development of towns and cities meant an acceleration of all the social processes of growth and change. New ideas followed the merchants and goods and travelled from town to town.

Wealthy burghers' patronage of art, architecture, painting, etc. The moneyed burghers contributed liberally for the improvements of the towns and cities. With the growth of urban population new experiments in municipal life were undertaken to solve the problems that emerged. The wealth of the burghers, *i.e.* merchants, brought liberal patronage of arts, architecture, painting, etc. The ruined high-gabled houses, sculptured guild halls, artistic gateways,

superb palaces, imposing cathedrals even today bear testimony to the fact that the medieval towns and cities were the foster home of culture.

The urban life with all its amenities made life worth living and the luxury that came in the wake of wealth made monastic life or asceticism naturally less attractive.

*Amenities of
urban life made
monasticism
less attractive*

APPENDIX

The Lombards : The Lombard League

1/ The Lombards: THE LONGOBARDS OR THE LOMBARDS were the last group of the east-German nation to settle within Italy. They moved from their recently adopted homeland between the Oder and the Danube. They were taken as allies by Emperor Justinian in his bid to defeat the Ostrogoths. During their war with the Ostrogoths they came to know Italy. The destruction of the Ostrogoths by Justinian removed the only power that was capable of keeping the Lombards out of Italy.

*Lombards
allies of
Justinian*

In the second half of the sixth century (568) the Lombards being pressed by the Avars entered Italy under their king Albion. This time they came not as allies but as conquerors. Within a year they spread over the entire valley of the Po, reduced Pavia and made it their capital. The Lombards had occupied the whole of the Po valley, inland Venetia, Tuscany and the duchies of Spoleto and Benevento. They did not oust the Romans from the possession of land, nor did they distribute land taken by conquest to their own kindred people. They were content with a share of the produce of the soil as tribute. Soon after, the Lombards became Arian Christians but by the seventh century became orthodox Christians. This made papacy irreconcilable with the Lombards.

*Lombards as
conquerors*

*Lombards—
converted as
Arian
Christians*

It is noteworthy that of all the German peoples that found their way into Italy the Lombards tenaciously clung to their native institutions, their own laws. Naturally it took longer before there was a fusion of the Lombards and the Romans as well as of their laws and institutions. The Lombards had their

*Fusion of the
Lombards
and the
Romans*

separate code of laws which they published in the seventh century and modified it a century later.

Albion was murdered by his wife and Cleph was elected king. But Cleph was murdered in his turn and during the next ten years there was no king of the Lombards. Thirty-five Lombard dukes set up their own principalities in the Roman cities they succeeded in conquering. The dukes of Spoleto and Benevento conquered more territories in Italy than their fellows.

*Lombard
dukes:
Dukes of
Spoleto and
Benevento
conquered
territories in
Italy*

The Byzantine emperor Maurice appointed a military viceroy for the defence of Italy against the Lombards. This step naturally spread consternation among the Lombards, who set aside their differences and got united. They elected Cleph's son Authari their king and contributed parts of their own principalities to build up the kingdom of Authari. Dukes of Spoleto and Benevento, however, did not part with their territory. Authari married the daughter of the duke of Bavaria, a Catholic Christian. Under his successor Agilulf who married Authari's widow, the task of building up a stable Lombard kingdom was taken up in right earnest.

*Lombard
unity against
Byzantine
emperor*

*Attempt at
building a
stable Lom-
bard kingdom
by Agilulf*

Agilulf put down with a strong hand all the rebel dukes and came to a friendly understanding with the Avars and then resumed the conquest of Italy. The duke of Benevento had already ruled the south except Naples, while the duke of Spoleto was attacking Rome. The personal influence of Pope Gregory the Great, however, succeeded in disarming Ariulf, duke of Spoleto. In the mean time king Agilulf took Padua, Parma, Mantua, etc., by repeated attacks. In this way the Lombard kingdom was established on a strong basis.

*Attack on
Italy by the
Lombard
dukes*

Under the ambitious Lombard king Liutprand (712-44) the conquest of Italy with a view to uniting it to Lombard kingdom was taken up. Liutprand also wanted to subdue the rebellious dukes of

*Liutprand
—conquest
of Italy*

*Liutprand
occupied
Bologna and
Sutri*

Benevento and Spoleto. Taking advantage of the conflict between the papacy and the Byzantine emperor over the Iconoclastic movement, Liutprand occupied Bologna and Sutri. But this had the effect of making the pope his enemy. It was the fear of the Franks that eventually led Liutprand to call a halt to his Italian conquests. With his death in 744 the Lombard kingdom became weak for the divergent policies and disunion inside it.

*Aistulf
succeeded to
Lombard
throne*

After a short period of struggle between rival claimants Aistulf, became the king. He conquered the Byzantine Italian possession of Ravenna and Romagna, leaving only Venice as the solitary possession of the Byzantine emperor in Italy. In the south the duchy of Benevento had conquered almost the whole. Aistulf now attacked Rome and thereby brought the Frankish intervention on behalf of the pope and lost the kingdom to the Franks.

*His attack
on Rome*

*Seizure of
papal lands
by the
Lombards*

Seizure of the papal lands in Northern Italy by the Lombards as well as their conquests down the Central Italy menaced Rome. Besides, the Lombards were Arian heretics, later turned orthodox. All this naturally made the pope irreconciled enemy of the Lombards. Pope Gregory saved Rome from being conquered by the Lombards and the Lombard Duke of Spoleto. The Frankish alliance of the Lombard king Liutprand made the Pope Boniface shaky and despite his request Charles Martel refused to abandon his Lombard ally. Charles Martel's son Pipin the Short, sought papal authorisation for his assumption of the royal title removing the Merovingian *rois faineant* from the throne. This was rewarded by Pipin by rendering military assistance to the pope against the Lombards. Pipin was made the Patricius of Rome and by his success against the Lombards became their overlord, as also the protector of the papacy.

*Pope Gregory
irreconciled
enemy of the
Lombards*

*Pipin's
assistance
to the Pope:
Title of
Patricius*

*Charles the
Great overlord*

Pipin's son Charles the Great by inheritance became the overlord of the Lombards and the Roman

Patricius as well as the protector of the papacy. Despite Pope Stephen's objection and advice, Charles married the Lombard princess. But when the Lombards renewed their attack against Rome, Charles responded to the appeal of the pope, besieged and overran the Lombard capital, conquered the Lombard duchies of Spoleto and Benevento. Lombard kingdom was absorbed in the Frankish kingdom, Charles became the king of the Lombards.

lord of the Lombards and the Roman Patricius; Charles conquered Spoleto and Benevento

2/ The Lombard League: Frederick Barbarossa's Italian policy brought him in conflict with the Lombard cities. In his Italian campaign of 1154 Frederick Barbarossa received submission of the Lombard cities. The enemies of the little city of Milan sought through the means of the emperor to curb its predominance. When Milan refused to obey Frederick attacked and sacked the little town and ruthlessly destroyed Tortona which was an ally of Milan. The whole of Lombardy rang with vengeance for the treatment meted out to Milan and Tortona, as the emperor proceeded to the south.

Frederick Barbarossa's conflict with the Lombard cities

In absence of the emperor in Italy, Milan became aggressive and had destroyed Lodi and Como. In his Italian expedition of 1158, Frederick Barbarossa stopped at Lombardy and there with the help of Cremona and Pavia, the two Lombard cities which were on his side, forced Milan to yield. After this Frederick held the memorable diet of the *Regnum Italicum*, i.e. the king of Italy at Roncaglia, proclaiming his authority. Four doctors of law expounded the doctrine of absolute rule by the Roman emperor. Their pronouncement helped Frederick to resume the direct rule of the cities and to obtain from them the wealth so needed for the monarchy. The republican autonomy of the cities, as the doctors of law expounded, was the result of usurpation and prescription. 'This unwarranted state was to be done away.' Frederick in order to make his authority supreme over the cities reclaimed the *regalia*, customs,

Diet of the Regnum Italicum

Frederick's attempt to do away with the republican autonomy of the Italian cities

Podestas tolls, mints, jurisdiction including the appointment of consuls and above all a single official called the *podesta* to exercise imperial authority in every government. The *podestas* were officers of Frederick's choice and held office during his pleasure. All this administered "a death-blow to the hardly won and painfully developed autonomy of the cities." Besides, Milan was punished by loss of half of her territory, Crema of her defensive walls.

Punishment to Milan and Crema Milan and Crema refused to obey and the emperor put these two cities under imperial ban. But Crema was besieged and cruelly forced to submit after a period of heroic resistance for six months.

Frederick Barbarossa's breach with the papacy In the mean time Frederick's breach with the papacy was widening. The pope allied himself with the revolted Lombard cities. At this juncture the death of Pope Adrian IV (1159) led to rivalry among the Roman cardinals and rival popes were elected. Victor IV was the pope elected by the cardinals who were on the side of the emperor and Alexander III by the papal party. Frederick summoned a council at Pavia which declared for Octavian IV. Alexander III refused to attend the council. All this involved the emperor and the pope inextricably in a conflict in which the emperor sought to revive his authority all over Italy and to subjugate the Lombards who joined hands with the papacy. Alexander excommunicated Frederick Barbarossa and released his subjects from his allegiance.

Emperor's attempt to revive his authority over whole of Italy

Rebellion in Milan: Suppressed with German reinforcement In 1161 Frederick began his Italian conquest with a great reinforcement that he summoned from Germany. But all his energy was held up for one long year in forcing the rebellious city of Milan to submit. Milan was razed to the ground and her citizens dispersed into four villages. Milan's allies Brescia and Piacenza lost their defensive walls and whole of Lombardy was placed under the rule of the imperial *podestas*.

But soon the Lombards rallied and a national patriotism, all the more roused by common suffering and indignation at the hands of the podestas, united them. In 1163 when Frederick was in Italy, Verona Padua and Vicenza rose in a joint revolt. This was the nucleus of a league. In the mean time, the death of the antipope Octavian IV and nomination of Paschal III antagonised many of the episcopal supporters who stood by the emperor so long. Alexander III who had left Rome due to the conflict with the antipope and the emperor, now finding the situation favourable returned to Rome. Frederick resolved to crush his adversaries by an overwhelming force. But a pestilence had weakened his striking power. City after city joined the Lombard League and in April, 1167, as a symbol of their union, they began to rebuild the city of Milan. There was hardly any city on the side of the emperor. Pestilence having played havoc with his army Frederick left for Germany with the remnant of his soldiers.

*Lombards
roused by
national
patriotism*

*Cities joined
Lombard
League*

*Frederick left
without any
city on his
side*

Lombards knowing well that Frederick would not abandon his scheme of conquest of Lombardy strengthened their League. Not a single city remained out of the League. They founded a new town in honour of Pope Alexander and named it after him. This city was situated on the confluence of the rivers Bormida and Tarano where it commanded the routes of Western Lombardy.

*Strengthening
of Lombard
League
against pos-
sible attack
by Frederick
Barbarossa*

In 1174 Frederick Barbarossa renewed his conquest of Lombardy. He besieged Alexandria but failed to take it even after prolonged siege of six months which compelled him to open negotiations with the League and Pope Alexander III. But the negotiations fell through and with a very small reinforcement he again took offensive only to be defeated at the hands of the League on May, 1176 near Legnano. Frederick after a crushing defeat took shelter in Pavia. 'The war of reconquest and the

*Frederick
Barbarossa
renewed
conquest of
Lombardy*

*Defeat of
Frederick*

hope of direct rule of the Lombard cities could not survive this decisive overthrow.'

Frederick did not give up his project of controlling Lombard cities: He felt the need for reconciliation with the pope

Yet after spilling so much blood, Frederick did not give up his project of controlling the church nor his desire to control the Lombard cities. His imperial ideas could not be reconciled to the municipal independence of the Lombard cities. He, however, recognised the need of reconciliation with the pope. A fifteen-year-truce was signed between Sicily, the pope's ally, and the emperor, by which the Pope Alexander III was recognised as the rightful pope by the emperor. Another truce for six years was signed between the emperor and the Lombard League.

Frederick II's scheme of conquering whole of Italy alarmed the Lombards

The long wrangle between the emperor and the pope had begun under Frederick II. Frederick's scheme of bringing whole of Italy under him and his summoning of a General Diet of the whole empire in 1226 to further his scheme in North Italy alarmed the Lombard cities. A second Lombard League was formed at once by the recalcitrant cities, and the Brenner Pass was seized by them thereby preventing the Germans from attending the General Diet. The Diet despite Frederick's fulmination ended in a fiasco.

Frederick II's rebellious son Henry allied with the Lombard League

Frederick II's son Henry had openly revolted against him in 1234 and he took the Lombard League as his ally. Henry was eventually compelled to surrender. At a Diet at Worms he was deposed and imprisoned to die later in 1242 in Apulia. Frederick II's real preoccupation was in North Italy; he resolved to put an end to the exasperating independence of the cities. All negotiations at mediation having failed the emperor took the field against Lombard League and defeated it at Cortenuova in November, 1237. But while the cities were all ready to surrender, Frederick's demand that it must be unconditional led them to resume resistance which was now more desperate than ever. Frederick's siege

Lombard defeat at Cortenuova

Resistance to the emperor

of Brescia in vain for two months encouraged the cities. They regained their heart. His siege of Milan likewise failed. Only Tuscany was in his obedience. His future attempts likewise had no success. With his death in 1250 the municipal independence of the Lombard cities continued to exist till a much later time.

3/ Medieval Trade and Commerce : In the twelfth century communes of single villages or groups of villages grew up. These were in the nature of rural townlets. The customs and privileges of certain model towns, *e.g.* Rouen, Beauvais, Soissons, etc., were imitated by others and the common needs of these were same. In the development of these communes and rural townlets economic progress was the deciding factor. Increased, although far from perfect, security at home or travelling with goods allowed trade and manufacture to grow. Growth of towns and cities while in many cases had been due to the settlement of itinerant traders to fixed areas, the growth of trade and commerce on the other hand, was due to the increase in the number of towns and cities. Trade both inland and maritime developed. The towns of Languedoc and Languedol were enriched by the trade that flowed up the Rhone and back between the Mediterranean and the fairs of Champagne. The Netherlands area was another centre of commerce of the North Sea. The Scandinavians who had nearly destroyed the Carolingian traffic revived it to their own advantage. They brought furs, and oriental goods which reached the Baltic Sea through Russia to Frankish coasts and up through navigable rivers. The weaving industry of Flanders and the metal work of the Meuse recovered and were stimulated by supplies of English wool and German minerals. At the nodal points of river and roads and at natural ports, ancient cities, new towns, etc., trade and manufacture developed. Bruges, at the head of the then

Communes in twelfth century :

Economic growth

Inland and maritime commerce

Bruges pivot of Netherland commerce

gulf of Zwyn became the commercial pivot of the Netherlands and the Flemish towns formed a league in London.

*Problem of
defence :*

*Growth of
communal
government*

*System of
gilds*

*Varied
degrees of
liberty in
commercial
towns and
cities*

Defence was, however, still a problem with the merchants who would inhabit the *faubourgs* outside the old fortified cities and new feudal castles for defence and in course of time built walls for the defence of their own settlements, ports, wharfs, warehouses, etc. Through violence or patronage of strong counts these merchants acquired communal government administering a new bourgeois law in place of inadequate feudal customs. In certain areas, such as the Netherlands there were essentially oligarchic government. The hereditary merchants called *poorters* imported raw materials, wool, metal and exported manufactured cloth and hardwares. Under them worked the subject craftsmen. In Italy and Germany craft-gilds grew up. Two types of gilds, the comparatively small one catering to local markets and the large ones catering to wide areas grew up. The large gilds were helped by the importing merchants who doled out raw materials to them and their productions were bought by the former for export to distant markets. This has a resemblance with the Indian *dadan* system.

One special characteristic of the medieval trading and commercial towns and cities was the political liberty that they assiduously sought to maintain. Diverse constitutions of a republican nature, with varying degrees of liberty developed in these cities and towns. The Italian cities like Milan, Venice, Florence, etc., may be mentioned in this connection. The rich businessmen took great interest in religious, political, cultural, in fact, all round improvement of cities. They took essential part in the advance of medieval politics and civilisation. But Italy was not the only country that saw such development. In Germany as well the most active among the cities, in matters of trade and commerce were episcopal

cities on the Rhine. The Jews with their wide connections, despite terrible persecution inflamed by fanaticism took a leading share in German trade. Cologne, Worms, Speir, Mainz, Basle obtained chartered market rights and freedom from toll and seignorial exactions. In North Germany Lubeck, Bremen and Hamburg gained similar privileges and Lubeck grew into a pivotal position in the Baltic and North Sea commerce. The merchants of these places ousted the Scandinavians from the fishing and carrying trade of the Baltic. Lubeck eventually became the centre of commercial *Hansa*, i.e. league which later came to be known as *Hanseatic League*. Small commercial towns looked to the Emperor or to their lords for favour and protection. Numerous self-governing towns and cities that grew up during the Middle Ages whether on Imperial domain, or lands of mesne lords made their advance in trade, manufacture, etc. Leagues or *Hansas* of towns developed to secure peace, abolition of arbitrary tolls and highway robbery.

German trading and commercial towns and cities

Hanseatic League and other Hansas

The process of commercial development despite the owes through which Europe passed reached its golden age in Italy in the fourteenth century. It was also the golden age of the merchants and bankers. They brought into general commercial use the system of active or sleeping partnership, joint-stock company, bill of exchange and the practice of insurance. Loans on interest although forbidden by the church became common practice and out of it developed the system of credit. The Florentines, it is said, loaned out vast amounts to government 'with pen, ink and parchment'.

Growth of banking, joint-stock, bill of exchange, etc.

The medieval trading and commercial systems and the institutions of credit that these gave rise to, laid the foundations of the modern systems of manufacture, trade and commerce, banking, etc., and in these respects their importance can hardly be overrated.

Foundation of modern economic systems

Hanseatic League

*Hansa—
league of the
German
towns in the
Baltic area*

*Lubeck centre
of the grow-
ing confede-
ration*

*Perfected
Hansa took
the name of
Hanseatic
League;
All German
towns on the
Baltic, North
Sea also new
towns on the
coasts of
Prussia,
Livonia and
Esthonia joined
the League;
The League
maintained
factories,
docks, etc.;
The League
held together
by common
mercantile
interests*

In the thirteenth century one of the significant developments in the Baltic area was the organisation of league of German towns, called the *Hansa*. The name *Hansa* had no special significance, for it was the name used to denote any guild or association of merchants in the northern countries. With the extension of German commerce throughout the Baltic, Lubeck became the centre of a growing confederation which included the neighbouring towns of Hamburg, Stralsund, Rostock as well as the German colony of Wisby. Late in the thirteenth century this group of towns secured valuable concessions in many quarters—specially in connection with the fur trade of Russia, the cloth trade of Flanders, and the fish trade of Norway and Sweden. Gradually, the western and eastern groups of German towns pooled their interests and perfected an organisation to administer their common affairs, and the combination which was a *Hansa par excellence*, came to be known as the Hanseatic League.

By the early fourteenth century, the League had enrolled all German towns on all rivers flowing into the Baltic or the North Sea and also the new towns that grew along the coasts of Prussia, Livonia and Esthonia.

The League maintained factories, permanent trading establishments with warehouses and docks at Novogorod, Burges and London. In each of these countries the Hanseatic League enjoyed exclusive control over the sale of Baltic product. The Hanseatic League sought to give protection to its establishments everywhere, which the feeble monarchy in many of the countries failed to offer, the League was not at all a political organisation, nor even national. It was held together solely by mercantile interests. It had neither any constitution, nor any common seal, nor even any central capital.

Lubeck became its seat for the simple reason of its commercial pre-eminence. Cologne ranked second and Hamburg, Bremen, Wisby were other important centres.

In the occasional Hanseatic congress, which was reputed to have representatives of more than fifty towns, did not mean much practically. Many of the communities did not bother to send representatives in the congress. The only punishment for rebellion of any town against the League was its expulsion. The Hanseatic League would also withhold shipping from recalcitrant ports. It forced Novogorod in 1392 and Burges in 1307 to submit by declaring an embargo on all trade. The same weapon succeeded in preserving favourable relations with foreign princes and monarchs.

*Hanseatic
Congress*

*Punishment
of rebellion—
expulsion of
and embargo
on the recal-
citrant ports*

The Hanseatic League encountered formidable opposition from the kingdom of Denmark. The Danish kings would from time to time claim portions of the Southern Baltic coasts as far as Scania, the tip of the Scandinavian peninsula. Scania was coveted by them for more than one reason: its economic importance and its strategic importance, for one who controlled Scania would control the entire peninsula besides its herring trade. About the middle of the fourteenth century Waldemar IV king of Denmark, took Scania from the king of Sweden to whom it had passed through inheritance, seized the island of Gothland and sacked Wisby. It was a war between Denmark and Sweden but the Hanseatic League joined Magnus, the king of Sweden as an ally and after taking Copenhagen dictated the terms of the Peace of Strasland in 1370 to the king of Denmark. By the treaty the Hanseatic League obtained free passage of the Sound and free trade throughout the Danish territory. Hanseatic officials were to have exclusive charge of the herring market as well as possession of four royal castles in Denmark until such time that the indemnity of war was paid

*Opposition to
Hanseatic
League by
Denmark*

*Peace of
Strasland*

*League
assumed
political
character*

by the Danish king. It was also stipulated that no successor on the Danish throne was to be placed without the consent of the Hanseatic League. Here the league for the first time assumed a political character, for the furtherance of their economic interest of course. But the league soon abandoned its right to interfere in the internal politics of Denmark and on Waldemar's death his daughter Margaret succeeded without any trouble.

*Causes of
decline of the
Hanseatic
League*

The Hanseatic League, however, following its commercial privileges long continued to gain power and wealth. Its decline in the fifteenth century was due to (i) the hostility of the Baltic states, (ii) gradual diversion of trade to the south and west, and (iii) the joining of the Baltic and the Mediterranean by new maritime routes which led to the passing of the commercial ascendancy to more convenient ports on the Atlantic sea board.

'The End.'

Chronology

	A.D.
INVASION OF EUROPE BY THE HUNS; MIGRATIONS OF THE GERMAN PEOPLES	375
<i>Battle of Adrianople; Visigoths invade Roman Empire</i>	378
<i>Reign of Emperor Theodosius</i>	378-395
<i>Council of Constantinople</i>	381
FINAL DIVISION OF ROMAN EMPIRE 	395
<i>Death of St. Ambrose</i>	397
<i>Sack of Rome by Visigoths</i>	410
<i>Death of St. Jerome</i>	420
<i>Vandals invade Africa</i>	429
<i>Death of St. Augustine</i>	430
<i>Reign of Pope Leo I, the Great</i>	440-461
ANGLES AND SAXONS SETTLE IN ENGLAND 	449
<i>St. Patrick in Ireland</i>	ca. 450
<i>Council of Chalcaedon</i>	451
<i>Defeat of Huns on the Catalaunian Fields</i>	451
<i>Invasion of Italy by Huns</i>	452
<i>Theodoric, King of Ostrogoths</i>	471-526
END OF WEST ROMAN EMPIRE 	476
<i>Reign of Clovis, King of Franks</i>	481-511
<i>Franks conquer Gaul</i>	486
<i>Ostrogoths begin conquest of Italy</i>	488
<i>Visigoths in Spain</i>	507
<i>Death of Boethius</i>	524
<i>Emperor Justinian of the East Roman Empire</i>	527-565
<i>Justinian's Law Code completed</i>	
<i>End of Vandal Kingdom in Africa</i>	534
<i>Death of St. Benedict</i>	543
END OF OSTROGOTH KINGDOM IN ITALY 	ca. 555
<i>Invasion of Northern Italy by Lombards</i>	568
<i>Reign of Pope Gregory the Great</i>	590-604
THE "HEGIRA"; FLIGHT OF MOHAMMED	
FROM MECCA TO MEDINA 	622
<i>Defeat of Persians by Heraclius</i>	626

	A.D.
<i>Death of Mohammed</i> ...	632
<i>Moslems conquer Syria</i> ...	636
<i>Moslems conquer Jerusalem</i> ...	638
<i>Moslems conquer Egypt</i> ...	642
PEPIN OF HERISTAL, MAYORDOMO OF THE FRANKISH KINGS ...	687-714
<i>Moslems seize Carthage</i> ...	698
MOSLEMS CROSS GIBRALTAR INTO EUROPE ...	711
<i>End of Visigoth Rule in Spain</i> ...	713
<i>Charles Martel, Mayordomo of Frankish Kings</i> ...	714-741
<i>Reign of Leo III, the Isaurian, in East Rome; Icono- clasm</i> ...	717-741
BATTLE OF TOURS AND POITIERS; RETREAT OF MOSLEMS ...	732
<i>Death of St. Bede</i> ...	735
<i>Pepin the Short becomes King of the Franks</i> ...	751
<i>Donation of Pepin (Papal States)</i> ...	754
<i>Death of St. Boniface</i>	
<i>Reign of Charlemagne</i> ...	768-814
<i>Conquest of Langobard Kingdom by Charlemagne</i> ...	774
<i>Expansion of Carolingian Empire into Bavaria, Saxony</i> ...	775-815
<i>Reign of Pope Leo III</i> ...	795-816
CHARLEMAGNE CROWNED EMPEROR ...	800
<i>Death of Harun-al-Raschid (Bagdad)</i> ...	809
VIKING INVASIONS OF IRELAND AND ENGLAND ...	825-870
<i>Moslems establish themselves in Sicily</i> ...	827
TREATY OF VERDUN; DIVISION OF CARO- LINGIAN EMPIRE ...	843
<i>Vikings (Northmen) in Russia; Rurik in Novgorod</i>	862
<i>Treaty of Mersen; Charlemagne's Empire redivided</i>	870
<i>Reign of Alfred the Great in England</i> ...	871-899
<i>Vikings at the Gates of Paris</i> ...	885
MAGYAR INVASION OF CENTRAL EUROPE ...	906
<i>Founding of Cluny Monastery</i> ...	910
<i>Viking Rule of Normandy</i> ...	911
<i>Reign of Henry I (of Saxony) in Germany</i> ...	919-936

	A.D.
<i>Reign of Otto the Great in Germany</i> ...	936-973
DEFEAT OF MAGYARS ON THE LECHFELD ...	955
<i>Beginnings of a Polish Kingdom</i> ...	960
OTTO THE GREAT OF GERMANY CROWN- ED EMPEROR ...	962
<i>Reign of Hugh Capet in France</i> ...	987-996
INTRODUCTION OF CHRISTIANITY IN RUSSIA (ST. VLADIMIR) ...	988
<i>Reign of Boleslav I of Poland</i> ...	992-1025
<i>Reign of Stephen I of Hungary</i> ...	997-1038
<i>Introduction of Christianity in Norway</i> ...	ca. 1000
<i>Reign of Yaroslav the Wise of Russia</i> ...	1015-1054
<i>Reign of Canute the Great in Denmark and England</i>	1016-1035
<i>Establishment of Kingdoms of Aragon, Castile, and Leon in Northern (Christian) Spain</i> ...	1035
<i>Reign of Emperor Henry III (House of Franconia)</i>	1039-1056
SYNOD OF SUTRI; BEGINNINGS OF CLUNY REFORM OF PAPACY ...	1046
<i>Schism between Orthodox and Catholic Churches begins</i>	1054
<i>Reign of Emperor Henry IV</i> ...	1056-1106
<i>Establishment of College of Cardinals for Papal Elections</i> ...	1059
BATTLE OF HASTINGS; CONQUEST OF ENGLAND BY NORMANS ...	1066
<i>Normans seize last Byzantine Holdings in Italy</i> ...	1071
<i>Byzantines defeat Turks at Manzikert</i>	
<i>Normans conquer Sicily</i> ...	1072-1091
<i>Reign of Pope Gregory VII</i> ...	1073-1085
<i>Incident of Canossa; Submission of Henry IV to Gregory VII</i> ...	1077
<i>Henry IV conquers Rome</i> ...	1083
<i>Normans seize Rome; Pope Gregory VII flees</i> ...	1084
CONQUEST OF TOLEDO BY CHRISTIANS IN SPAIN	1085
<i>Carthusian Order founded</i> ...	1086
<i>Domesday Book compiled</i>	
<i>Council of Clermont</i> ...	1095
FIRST CRUSADE ...	1096-1099
<i>Founding of Cistercian Order</i> ...	1098

	• A.D.
CAPTURE OF JERUSALEM BY CHRISTIANS ...	1099
<i>Reign of Louis VI of France</i> ...	1108–1137
<i>Reign of Vladimir II Monomach of Russia</i> ...	1113–1125
St. Bernard, Abbot of Clairvaux ...	1115–1153
<i>Concordat of Worms, ending Investiture Struggle in Germany</i> ...	1122
<i>Death of Peter Abelard</i> ...	1142
<i>Establishment of Kingdom of Portugal</i> ...	1143
SECOND CRUSADE ...	1147–1149
<i>Death of Abbot Suger; Marriage of Henry II of England and Eleanor of Aquitaine</i> ...	1151
<i>Reign of Emperor Frederick I Barbarossa (House of Hohenstaufen)</i> ...	1152–1190
<i>Reign of Henry II of England</i> ...	1154–1189
<i>Lubeck re-founded by Henry the Lion</i>	
<i>Germans in Livonia; Swedes in Finland</i> ...	1158
<i>Constitutions of Clarendon regarding clergy in England</i>	1164
ARCHBISHOP THOMAS BECKET MURDERED IN CANTERBURY ...	1170
<i>Rebellion against Henry II of England</i> ...	1173
<i>Origin of Waldensian "Heresy"</i> ...	ca. 1175
<i>Frederick Barbarossa defeated at Legnano by Lombard League</i> ...	1176
<i>Third Lateran Council</i> ...	1179
<i>Reign of Philip II Augustus of France</i> ...	1180–1223
<i>Submission of Henry the Lion to Frederick Barbarossa</i>	1181
<i>Sultan Saladin conquers Jerusalem</i> ...	1187
THIRD CRUSADE ...	1189–1193
<i>Reign of Richard the Lion-Hearted</i> ...	1189–1199
<i>Reign of Emperor Henry VI</i> ...	1190–1197
<i>Frederick II of Hohenstaufen becomes King of Sicily</i> ...	1198
<i>Reign of Pope Innocent III</i> ...	1198–1216
<i>Founding of Order of Livonian Knights (Brethren of the Sword)</i> ...	1202
FOURTH CRUSADE; CAPTURE OF CONSTANTINOPLE BY CRUSADERS ...	1202–1204
<i>Albigensian "Crusade"</i> ...	1209–1213

	A.D.
<i>Children's Crusades</i>	1212
<i>England becomes Papal Fief</i>	1213
<i>Defeat of Emperor Otto IV at Bouvines</i>	1214
<i>Reign of Emperor Frederick II</i>	1214-1250
FOURTH LATERN COUNCIL	1215
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